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NAPOLEON: THE FALL.

NAPOLEON AT FONTAINEBLEAU.

NAPOLEON:

THE FALL

by

E. M. BEARDSLEY.

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"It was time that this vast man should fall. The moment had come for incorruptible supreme equity to look to it.

Napoleon had been impeached before the Infinite, and his fall was decreed.

He vexed God."

Victor Hugo.

PREFACE.

This work (I can hardly use so pretentious a title as a history) deals with the fall of Napoleon—the greatest overthrow, the greatest catastrophe recorded in the annals of human story, and with the sombre tragedy of his long dragged-out, agonising death on his Promethean rock of Saint Helena, and is divided into three epochs or phases, the three stages of his Titanic overthrow. These phases in Napoleon's fall are clearly defined and distinct; the first from the outbreak of the Russian war in the summer of 1812 to his arrival at Warsaw in December of the same year, after the fatal retreat from Moscow; the second from his return to Paris after the disastrous campaign of Russia to his first abdication at Fontainebleau; and the third from his detention at Elba to his death at Saint Helena.

I have dealt somewhat exhaustively upon the Russian war, up to the commencement of the retreat of the Grand Army from the ruins of Moscow, as this was Napoleon's last campaign in new realms of conquest and the last in which he was the aggressor, for the German war of 1813 was really a defensive war, in which Napoleon fought for the preservation of his dominion in Central Europe, and in the campaign of France, in 1814, he fought against banded Europe not merely in defence of France, but for his very existence, and in the Waterloo campaign, although he was actually the aggressor, he took the initiative to forestall the allied

armies of Europe closing upon him for the invasion of France and his utter subversion.

The prime causes of the Russian war of 1812, of Napoleon's downfall, were the refusal of Napoleon to evacuate Prussia, withdraw his troops from the French garrisons on the Oder and the Vistula, and on the part of Russia the relaxation of the Continental System over the dominions of the Czar. In a sense, therefore, the Russian war of 1812 may be regarded as a commercial war engendered by England, for without England the Continental System would never have been.

Englishmen hug themselves with the idea that Waterloo is a *purely* British victory. I have endeavoured to dispel and at the same time prove the fallacy of this fatuous idea, however distasteful it may be to the *amour propre* of most Britons, and to show that Prussia shares equally with England in the overthrow of their mutual enemy at Waterloo, and that without the timely arrival of Blücher at the crucial moment Wellington would have been obliged to abandon the field of battle. Waterloo is not an *exclusively* British victory: Napoleon was overthrown there by the *united armies of England and Prussia*, and not by the unaided efforts of the British army or the military skill of either of the allied generals.

To his detractors Napoleon is a bloodthirsty tyrant, a usurper, grasping and unrelenting. If he was a tyrant and a usurper, then his tyranny and usurpation were of inestimable beneficence to mankind, and his wars and conquests, paradoxical as it may seem, a blessing to the world. If he conquered Italy it was only to pave the way to her present unification. If he conquered Germany and Prussia it was only to infuse

among all Germans a spirit of inextinguishable patriotism. If he conquered Egypt it was only to revive her ancient splendour and disclose to the world her archæological wonders and benefit her by his enlightened legislation. If he conquered Poland it was only to deliver her, for the nonce, from the hated yoke of Prussia. If he conquered Spain it was only to abolish the Inquisition, abridge the oppressive power of the Roman Church, eradicate all feudal laws, and revivify the internal commerce and promote the prosperity of the country. If he imprisoned the Pope and reft him of his temporal power, it was only to manifest to the world that the inviolableness of the Papacy was but a fatuity—the wildest of all chimeras. If he usurped the throne of the Bourbons he only did so to stem the Revolution, to organise the legislature of France, and by his Code to ameliorate the lot of man not merely in France, but in Germany, Italy, Prussia, Holland, Spain and Switzerland as well.

Although perhaps the greatest conqueror that the annals of history have ever known, yet Napoleon stands forth as the champion of the free-will of man, and as the greatest example the world has yet seen to what a pre-eminence of power the very humblest may attain through the afflatus of supreme genius. Napoleon stands for freedom inasmuch as he assailed and battered down the thrones of the effete dynasties of Europe, and made the crowned despots of Europe grovel at his feet by means of that power which a militant democracy and a revolutionary France had invested him with, and which his genius converted into such a formidable instrument of retribution, for he was the avenger of that great political crime—the partition of Poland by the condign chastise-

ment which the three bandit nations, that had robbed the Poles of their independence, Prussia, Russia, and Austria, received alternately at his hands at Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland.

Had Napoleon never lived, had his strenuous individuality been substituted by a tamer train of historical events, had the space in history which his vast entity displaces been filled up instead by less stirring events than those which have signalled his career, had the dawn of the 19th century not witnessed the exploits of one even greater than Alexander, and in short not enabled us to gauge to what a pre-eminence—to what illimitable supremacy the human intellect can attain, what a void would have remained in history to be filled. What sterility would have existed in man's conception of human genius, of human possibilities!

Napoleon is unquestionably the most virile of human beings the modern world, at all events, has ever known. If ever mortal justly deserved the title of man it was he: he is the very quintessence of masculineness. In France he was not so much the general, the Consul or the Emperor as *l'homme*—the man; he is the antithesis of femininenes and of whatever is effete, inept, debile, decadent, or emasculated, and had he never lived it would have been necessary to revert to a remote period of human story to the annals of ancient history to the days of Cæsar, Hannibal and Alexander to find an intellect in any way comparable in strenuous virility to his own, and even then no adequate conception of an intellect as vigorous as that of Napoleon could have been formed owing to the impersonality which these great human prodigies have acquired through the nebulousness, the opaqueness which the centuries have woven

around their names and through which their forms loom majestically but intangibly. Therefore had Napoleon never existed no other mortal in modern history could ever have replaced him unless it be by Cromwell, and even he, in spite of the virility of his vast masculine intellect, would have been but a poor substitute, owing to the restricted arena of his exploits.

A question may well be asked: Why was Saint Helena, of all places in the world, selected as the spot for the incarceration of Napoleon?—presumably on account of its remoteness from Europe and from all relations with civilisation, and of the physical character of the island, which was admirably adapted by nature for the prison of one whom Christendom had resolved should never escape the grip of its relentless hatred or ever again enjoy a tithe of liberty. In 1814-1815, during Napoleon's detention at Elba, the question of his deportation to Saint Helena hal already suggested itself to the plenipotentiaries of the Allies at the Congress of Vienna. England had charged herself with the inglorious and ignominious duty of manacling and gaging Napoleon and made herself responsible for the preclusion of it ever being possible for him to effect his escape from that island stronghold of the South Atlantic. It is hardly necessary to say how conscientiously and with what virulent relish and zest she, as his custodian, fulfilled her odious mission.

However essential the detention of Napoleon may have been for the peace of Europe, although nothing can palliate the unlawfulness and barbarity of his incarceration *for life* at Saint Helena, yet England might have displayed even a modicum of humanity towards her great enemy by her choice of locality, out of all her vast

colonial possessions, for his last abode on earth. As Napoleon had been denounced by the world and denied the right of domicile among civilised nations, ostracised from Europe and the society of his fellow-men, for the simple reason that he had proved himself stronger than those dullards, the legitimate sovereigns of Europe combined together, it is not surprising if England was not over squeamish with regard to her selection of the locality for the future residence of the erstwhile king of kings, or of its geographical situation, as to her mind any place was good enough for such a monster as he, hence her choice of such a desirable spot as Saint Helena is obvious. A more lugubrious, dismal and forbidding spot than Saint Helena could scarcely have been found on the face of the globe. The Antilles, the Bahamas, the Bermudas, Jamaica, Mauritius, or Trinidad would have been veritable Elysiums in comparison with that repellent, wind-swept rock of the Southern Tropics. But England had resolved that Napoleon should drain the cup of unintermitted agony, degradation, misery and sorry to the very lees, hence her choice of Saint Helena where he was to expiate his enormities and which was destined to be the pyre of his immolation.

In spite of the fact that an eminent English historian smugly asserts that a more delightful and in every way desirable spot than Saint Helena, at least from a climatical point of view, could with difficulty have been found in either hemispheres for the place of Napoleon's confinement, we nevertheless are obliged to own that there is not the least shadow of a doubt that the *salubrious* climate of Saint Helena told fatally upon Napoleon's health and tended to abridge his life by fully a decade,

if not more. We offer every apology for presuming to differ with the said distinguished historian with respect to the great attractions and amenities of Saint Helena as a place of residence for saint or sinner, but notwithstanding the favourable way which that halcyon isle seems to have impressed him we earnestly pray it will never be his enviable lot to exhale the delectable air of that veritable Eden of the South Atlantic ostracised, for five consecutive years—nay for the rest of his allotted time on earth, from all intercourse and communion with his fellow-men and kith and kin.

The *universality* of Napoleon is a question we have to touch upon. By universality I mean that having played so conspicuous and momentous a rôle in the history of nearly every nation of the civilised world and having so vitally influenced their destiny, he seems in a sense to belong as much to Europe in general as to France alone, for he is a principle as he was a necessity, an indispensability to mankind—the panacea for all feudal impositions and the tyranny of legitimate kingship. If he warred and bowled over the thrones of the crowded imbeciles of Europe at the head of the armies of France, it was only through the caprice of Fortune, for after all he was an alien, not a Frenchman at all, a Corsican, a foster-child of France, and it was solely through her acquisition of Corsica that France was destined to conquer the Continent of Europe, and had that island not fallen under her dominion, the task of subugating Europe would never have been allotted to her. Not a nation of the civilised world but is indebted, directly or indirectly, to Napoleon for something or other, beneficial or otherwise, but in the main for what is beneficial. But for him what would the obstruent

German Empire and Italy be to-day? Certainly not the powerful states they are; and with regard to Austria how vitally did he effect her destiny by his victory at Austerlitz and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, the natural corollary to that overwhelming triumph? What inestimable blessings did Holland, Switzerland, and Spain derive from his Code! And to him the Poles, to this day, owe their last glimpse of freedom (transient though it be) since that dastardly political crime, the partition of their country by the legitimate sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

Napoleon is so *human*. Unlike other conquerors, kings, emperors or potentates, who exercise or have exercised unlimited power, transmitted to them solely through the laws of heredity, there is something in common, in sympathy between himself and humanity in general, with those in obscurity, penury and affliction; for all these he experienced at some time or other during his unparalleled career in all their naked horror. The miseries and poverty of his early years will appeal to the obscure aspirant as forcibly as the torments and anguish he endured in his riper age at Saint Helena will appeal to those who are persecuted, coerced, oppressed, in adversity and in tribulation, and on the other hand he will be the ideal, the cynosure of those who enjoy supreme dominion, of emperors, kings, princes and the great ones of this world—financiers, millionaires, and those who enjoy success, felicity, opulence, and the full benefits of this world, for never before or since his time has mortal man ever attained to such supremacy, or bewildering height of power as he. The career of no other mortal is so replete with splendour and unintermitted success, tragedy, catastrophe and disaster as his: no

other mortal has drunk so fully of the cup of supreme felicity and renown or of the bumper of anguish and humiliation to the very lees of sorrow as he; no mortal before or since rose to such a height of power to fall so low.

E. M. B.

POSTSCRIPT.

As this work was written prior to the war, I feel it incumbent upon me to express how much it is to be regretted that Prussia should have been England's ally against Napoleon, and that his overthrow at Waterloo was in no small measure due to the military co-operation of such a scurrilous nation as she has proved herself to be by her inhuman and barbarous methods in the present war, and whose Emperor, that contemptible being Kaiser Wilhelm II., obsessed with the conviction that he is the incarnated replica of the Corsican, has presumed in vain to emulate the career and exploits of the "Man of Destiny."

In Napoleon Britain had an enemy she could at least respect, for in crossing swords with him her escutcheon has not been sullied, for besides being the greatest soldier of either ancient or modern times, he was something greater still, something which the Kaiser is certainly not, and which Britons appraise perhaps even above genius. He was a *man*. But with the Kaiser England is in a death grapple with a vile, despicable thing, a monstrocity in human form, a being without pity, without principles, without honour, withour morals, a creature wholly devoid of every manly virtue or instinct, of every vestige that tends in an infinitesimal degree to constitute the *man* in the sense that Napoleon was a *man*, much less a great man or a man of genius, and whom it behoves the banded nations of civilisation as a

bounden duty, nay, as a sacred contract, to utterly extirpate as a foul, loathsome, noxious pest for whom it is a dishonour for a clean and upright people ever to have further intercourse or parley or dealings with.

I must express my indebtedness to The Right Honourable Lord Napier and Ettrick for the photograph taken by him of Napoleon's writing table and chair at Fontainebleau and given to me by his lordship, and to Captain W. H. Cope for those of Longwood, Jamestown, the Entrance to Napoleon's Tomb, and the Tomb of Napoleon, also a gift from the latter, which five photographs are reproduced in this work.

E.M.B.

May, 1918.

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PHASE I.

MOSCOW : NEMESIS.

"Had I died at Moscow I should have left behind me a reputation as a conqueror without a parallel in history. A ball ought to have put an end to me there. To die at Borodino would have been to die like Alexander. . . . It was making War on Russia that ruined me."

Napoleon.

NAPOLEON: THE FALL

CHAPTER I

Napoleon invades Russia—Napoleon and the Poles—His Entry into Wilna—Reflections.

On the 29th of May, 1812, Napoleon left Dresden to assume the command of his army on the Niemen, and reached Danzig on the 7th of June. The time he spent in this city he dedicated to his final arrangements for the invasion of Russia. On the 12th he was at Königsberg. As a prelude to Russia's overthrow he reviewed the bulk of his immense army on the field of Friedland, where five years before he shattered the proud legions of the Czar, which victory ensured him the suzerainty of Europe, where erstwhile the solemn thunder of artillery rolled, where the bugle sounded the charge to death, now a peaceful plain no longer defiled by the grim mementos of war. Could any spot tend more to stimulate the valour of French soldiers and endue them with confidence than the field of Friedland?

What lends a portentous interest to the Russian War of 1812 is that it represents the most stupendous and efficient concentration of human power history has perhaps ever known put into full momentum by a single individual, and he the most consummate, the most potent of all the myriads of human beings that through the æons of time have trod this earth of ours.

If at Dresden Napoleon's power had been made manifest by the obeisance of kings, now it was made evident by the heterogeneity, the variety of the nationality of his army. Such a medley of different races as was now ranged under his banner, banded together in a common cause, had never been seen since the Crusades. All the forces of Europe between Cape Spartivento and the Baltic were at his disposal. Germany alone supplied him with 147,000 men; the Italian peninsula, including the kingdom of Italy, with 80,000; the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, including subsequent levies, with 85,000. Even Switzerland and Spain were represented by their contingents. Austria was obliged to furnish him with 30,000 auxiliaries, and Prussia with 20,000. The grand total of these various forces, drafted from countries which in reality were nothing more than satrapies and dependencies of the French empire, amounted to over 362,000 men. This formidable host, conjoined with the Grand Army of France, 200,000 strong, now followed Napoleon's hitherto invincible eagles for the overthrow of Russia.

On the 24th of June Napoleon crossed the Niemen at the head of an army numbering close upon 600,000 men, drafted from every corner of Europe and comprising nearly every nationality of the civilised world. This vast host was divided into ten corps—that of Davoust; of Oudinot; of Ney; of Eugene; of Poniatowski; of Saint-Cyr; of Reynier; of Junot; of Victor; of Macdonald, and included besides the Old Guard under Lefebvre; the Young Guard under Mortier; the reserve cavalry under Nansouty, Montbrun, Grouchy, and Latour-Maubourg, all under the command of Murat; the cavalry of the Guard and the Aus-

trian auxiliaries under Schwartzenberg. Every type, from the swarthy dark-eyed Calabrian and Provençale to the fair-haired, blue-eyed Saxon and Pole, was represented in its ranks. It seemed as though all the forces of mankind had congregated upon the banks of the Niemen for the destruction of Russia.

It was upon the waters of the Niemen, now Napoleon's Rubicon, that reflected the serried ranks of an embattled world, upon the raft of Tilsit, five years ago, that Napoleon and Alexander I of Russia in concord met. The compact struck upon the raft of Tilsit, that seemed the pledge of a permanent peace, at least between the Empires of the West and the East, was broken now, severed were the bonds of friendship that formerly united Napoleon and Alexander—transient indeed were the results of Friedland!

Whilst reconnoitering the banks of the Niemen, Napoleon's charger stumbled, and the Emperor was thrown to the ground, an incident peculiarly significant, considering the fatal issue of this war, and which to the superstitious might well be interpreted as a presage of misfortune. This mischance, however, disconcerted Napoleon but little, for immediately after he gave orders for the construction of three bridges over the Niemen, and as he retired to his quarters he was heard humming the tune, " Marlbrook s'en va à la guerre," and repeating with emphasis the line, " Ne sait quand il reviendra."

Napoleon's irruption into Russian territory was heralded by a tremendous thunderstorm, a fit premonition to this disastrous war. The very elements seemed arrayed against nim; one might say they had constituted

themselves the protectors of Holy Russia, and with good reason, considering the appalling sequel to this war.

Napoleon crossed the Niemen at Kowno with the divisions of Davoust and Oudinot, the Imperial Guard commanded by Bessieres, Mortier, and Lefebvre, and the reserve cavalry under Murat, and as he set foot upon Russian territory he exclaimed, addressing his troops, "Russia is now being led to her fate, let her destiny be fulfilled!"

On the 30th of June Eugene Beauharnais crossed at Pilony, and Jerome Bonaparte at Grodno. Early in the morning of the 24th of June Davoust took possession of Kowno, and there on an eminence near the banks of the Niemen Napoleon beheld the nucleus of his vast army defile before him. Fully 200,000 men, including 40,000 cavalry, debouching from the great forest of Pilwiski, which screened the Niemen from the west, marched past before him on that day into Russian territory. A more inspiring sight the world had probably never yet seen. The dense masses of infantry, the long trains of artillery, the cuirassiers in their glittering cuirasses and helmets, the glint of 150,000 bayonets and of other arms, the magnificence of the accoutrements, all combined to form a scene of unparalleled splendour, of irresistible might.

In spite of Napoleon's acumen he made several fatal mistakes, but the greatest, in our estimation at least, was undoubtedly his apathetic attitude with regard to the restoration of Polish independence.

Napoleon's reappearance in Poland in the summer of 1812 revived the smouldering fire of Sarmatian patriotism. In the invincible captain who now bestrode

the continent, who was now leading a world in arms against Russia, their hated oppressor, the Poles beheld the saviour of their long-suffering country. The presence of the victor of Friedland once more in their midst raised the hopes of that gallant nation. The disappointments of five years ago were now forgotten. Surely this time their hopes would be realised! Therefore, during his halt at Wilna, the Diet of Warsaw notified Napoleon, through a deputation, their determination to restore the independence of Poland. This announcement was received by Bonaparte, if not with actual disfavour, at any rate with marked reticence, his attitude being as equivocal as it had been during his first Polish war. The president of the deputation announced to Napoleon that the Diet, having constituted themselves into the Confederation of Poland, had now proclaimed the re-establishment of the kingdom of the Jagellons, and concluded with the words: "Sire, declare that the kingdom of Poland exists, and this decree will be regarded by the world as equivalent to the reality."

Napoleon's reply to the deputation was hardly calculated to inspire the Polish Diet with much hope, and at the best was but a lame apology for his non-acquiescing with their demands. He had guaranteed to Austria, he said, the integrity of the whole of her Sarmatian provinces, therefore, out of regard for that Power, he could scarcely countenance the re-establishment of the kingdom of Poland, but at the same time he confessed, with strange incompatibility, he sympathised with the Poles in their struggle: "In my situation," he said, "I have many duties to fulfil, many interests to conciliate. Had I reigned at the time of the first, the second, and third partition of Poland, I would have armed my subjects

in her defence. . . . I love your country, . . . I authorise the efforts which you are about to make. . . Persevere, and it is to be hoped your wishes will be crowned with success."

Napoleon's disingenuous attitude towards the Poles was strangely unintelligible. If he had no intention to restore their independence, why did he incite them to persevere in their efforts towards the emancipation of their country? On the other hand, had he been really desirous to concede them their independence, why not have done so now? No better opportunity than the present could be offered for such a project.

Surely had Bonaparte been solicitous of Poland's freedom the mere fact of depriving Austria of her Polish provinces would hardly have deterred him from accomplishing this object, and would have been a small breach of equity when compared with the proscription of the royal houses of Naples and Portugal, the subversion of the Spanish Bourbons, the incarceration of the Pope. Besides, Austria was helpless at his feet, she could have offered him no tangible resistance, she had not yet recovered from the severe blow he dealt her nearly three years ago at Wagram. Even with Austria out of the question he could easily have constituted an independent State out of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and certainly from the side of Frederick Augustus, who was only his vassal, he would have met with no opposition. Moreover, now that he was at war with Russia, any scruples that Power may have entertained with regard to Polish independence were now set at naught by him. The mere fact that he was at war with Russia would in itself have sufficiently absolved him from any engage-

NAPOLEON *(from a sketch by the author).*

ments he may have made to the Czar detrimental to the independence of Poland.

Insidious as Napoleon's conduct may have been after Tilsit, yet in a measure he may be acquitted for his duplicity at that time, as out of regard for Alexander, his ally, he could not then very well have sanctioned the independence of Poland without offending the powerful autocrat of the East; but in 1812 this consideration no longer existed, therefore his attitude towards the Poles at this time was unwarrantable, nay, even treacherous, and certainly short-sighted as far as his ulterior welfare was concerned, for there is no doubt that had he re-established the constitution of Poland and restored to her those provinces which Russia had torn from her in the spoliations of 1773-1793-1795, his position, after the terrible retreat from Moscow, would have been infinitely more secure than it was subsequently, for doubtless the whole Polish nation would have risen *en masse* in his favour, and perhaps staved off the advance of Russia's triumphant legions, and certainly weakened the coalition of 1813.

Yet even now the Poles were not without hope, for 60,000 gallant Poles, led by the valiant Poniatowski and the brave Dombrowski, were following Napoleon's banner into the very heart of the Czar's dominions. If with hopes deferred and an uncertain future they served him so well and proved such zealous partisans in his cause, of what signal service might they not have been to him as an independent nation, when the confederated battalions of an avenging world confronted him, when his star was fast setting, in lurid splendour, behind the sullen clouds of disaster?

If by not granting the Poles their independence Napoleon committed the greatest mistake of his life, then perhaps the next greatest was the prosecution of the Russian war after his occupation of Wilna.

To have entered upon this campaign so late in the year as the end of June, considering the immense distance to be traversed before attaining his goal, was in itself a sufficiently serious mistake, but to have delayed nearly three weeks at Wilna seems, in so consummate a commander as Bonaparte, more than extraordinary, seems nothing less than suicidal.

We do not go so far as to say that in Wilna Napoleon found his Capua, but what we do think is that had he not made such a lengthy stay at Wilna the sufferings which his army endured in its fatal retreat from Moscow would have been considerably mitigated.

Napoleon's protracted stay at Wilna was a golden opportunity for Alexander. During this time he signed treaties of alliance with England, Sweden, and the Spanish Cortes, and through the mediation of England he made peace with Turkey; thus he was enabled greatly to reinforce his armies that later pursued Napoleon's attenuated columns out of Russia.

Napoleon's prolonged stay at Wilna was an event altogether anomalous in a Napoleonic campaign. At the same time this prolonged stay in this city was in a great measure due to the unsatisfactory state of his commissariat, the disorganisation and defectiveness of which caused him no little anxiety, and to a last, but futile, attempt at reconciliation with the Czar. Nevertheless, in a man such as Napoleon, such a lengthy pause, especially at the outset of a campaign, seems extraordinary to say the least. In none of his wars was

celerity of more vital importance than in this campaign. The great distance which his army had to traverse as well as the advanced time of the year made it incumbent that the war should be brought to a close ere the winter season had set in, and yet a winter campaign even in the heart of Russia, cannot, after all, have seemed such a formidable undertaking to the man who in 1805, amidst the snows of Moravia, 700 miles from Paris, overthrew Austria, conquered Germany, and humbled Russia at Austerlitz; who in the winter of 1807, in the plains of Eastern Prussia, nearly 1,000 miles from the walls of the Tuileries, emerged victorious after the butchery of Eylau. If victorious then, surely would not his chances of victory be even greater now with all the coherts of Western and Central Europe arrayed under his banner?

Napoleon little guessed the appalling results of this war; he was fully convinced that with St. Petersburg or Moscow in his grasp the war would be over and Russia at his feet. It would be the campaigns of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland and Wagram repeated only on a more Titanic scale, for the conquest of Russia would find him near the goal of his aspiration—on the very threshold of universal dominion.

Napoleon entered Wilna on the 28th of June at the head of Prince Radzivil's Polish regiment: there he remained eighteen days, and did not leave that city until the 16th of July. To cover the great distance that separated him from either St. Petersburg or Moscow would involve a march, at the very lowest computation, of two months' duration, the slow progression of the commissariat tending to retard the advance of the Grand Army. Under these circumstances he could not have

hoped to reach his goal before the middle of autumn, which would have meant taking his winter quarters at least 1,400 or 1,600 miles from Paris.

Even had this war terminated auspiciously for Napoleon his position, at the best, would have been decidedly precarious in the heart of the vast Empire of the Czars, with a continent between him and France, conquered it is true, but ready to uprise against him on the first opportunity.

Undoubtedly Napoleon's wisest course would have been to have postponed the invasion of Russia until the spring of the following year, and to have put the bulk of his army in winter quarters at Wilna and on the line of the Niemen. This interruption of the war would have been his salvation, for he could then have turned his attention to the Spanish peninsula. In the ensuing eight months he would have had ample time to deal with Wellington and crush the Spanish uprising. The subjugation of Spain and Portugal would have liberated his armies, that were opposed to Wellington, from the Iberian peninsula, and materially augmented the strength of his army in Lithuania.

And yet it would have seemed perhaps still more extraordinary had he relinquished this war, considering that during sixteen years of practically unintermitted warfare never once (with the exception of his Syrian expedition) did he deviate from his march of conquest, never did he abandon an enterprise once adopted, ever did he attain his goal, however remote it may have been.

Besides, if for his prestige only, he could not well have suspended this war. What would the stricken nations say, what would history say, if he, the first cap-

tain of the modern world, the hero of Marengo, of Ulm, of Austerlitz, of Jena, of Friedland, of Wagram, the dismembrator of empires, with all the cohorts of the civilised world marching in his train, were to stop short his march of conquest, to rein-up his fiery steeds of war, he who had trod all the roads to glory from the immutable East to the limitless plains of Poland?

For the sake of argument, let us assume Napoleon to have stopped his march to Wilna, to have postponed the invasion of Russia until the spring of 1813. What would have been his position with regard to Russia, how much would such a measure have affected his future destiny—the world's destiny?

Had Napoleon postponed this war and had he returned to Paris, where his presence was indispensable, there to assume the direction of military affairs for the subjugation of the Spanish peninsula, the outcome of such a procedure would undoubtedly have entirely altered his subsequent career and the whole trend of modern history as well.

Had he left Wilna on the 16th of July (the date upon which he quitted that city for his momentous march upon Moscow), after leaving the greater part of his army in Lithuania, he would have arrived in Paris by the beginning of August at the latest. During the ensuing month he would have been making preparations for the conquest of Spain and Portugal, and in all probability he would have been ready to take the offensive by the end of September. By the end of October he would have been at Madrid, and once more have reinstated Joseph Bonaparte permanently on the throne of Spain and the Indies.

The occupation of Madrid, however, would not have

meant the complete conquest of the peninsula, for there would still be Wellington to deal with, who, after his great victory at Salamanca and his occupation of Madrid and pursuit of Clausel to Burgos, had, upon the news of Napoleon's advance on Madrid, retreated upon Ciudad Rodrigo on the Portuguese frontier, as in effect he actually did after his unsuccessful attempt upon Burgos.

It is highly improbable that Wellington would have advanced from Ciudad Rodrigo to oppose Napoleon, for the very excellent reason that his army would have been considerably smaller than that of his mighty antagonist, for Bonaparte would have been at the head of at least 200,000 men, the flower of the French army, the veterans of Eckmühl and Wagram. It is also equally improbable that the British commander would have awaited Napoleon's onset behind the defences of Ciudad Rodrigo. It is almost certain that upon Napoleon's advance towards the Douro he would have fallen back into Portugal to withstand Napoleon's onslaught on the all but impregnable lines of Torres Vedras, where two years before he so successfully baffled the military genius of Massena. But Massena was not Napoleon; where Massena had failed we may perhaps be pardoned for presuming that Napoleon might have succeeded, and what occurred nearly four years before at Corunna might possibly have been re-enacted at the mouth of the Tagus.

With the extrusion of the British from Portugal the conquest of the peninsula would have been achieved, but not until then. The close of 1812 might have seen the Tricolor waving in triumph from the Pyrenees to Lisbon and Cadiz.

In the meantime, while Napoleon was engaged in subjugating the Spanish peninsula, what would have been the state of affairs on the Niemen?

On the outbreak of the Russian war of 1812 the Muscovite armies actually in the field numbered at least 265,000 men, but during Napoleon's lengthy sojourn at Wilna, the Czar, after he had brought his relations with Sweden and Turkey on a friendly footing, was enabled to greatly augment the strength of his armies in Western Russia, so that towards the middle of September, 1812, the Russian armies in the field, increased by Tchichagoff's army of Moldavia and by that of Steinheil from Finland, amounted to over 365,000 men, a host numerically about equal to that of the French in cantonments at Wilna and on the line of the Niemen, as with the withdrawal by Napoleon of at least 200,000 men for the reduction of the Spanish peninsula, the Grand Army would have been considerably reduced, yet sufficiently strong to contend, if need be, against the Russian legions beyond the Niemen.

Although, even after Napoleon's departure from Wilna in July, the French army in Lithuania might have been at that period considerably more numerous than the Russian, yet, if the Austrian and Prussian auxiliaries be eliminated (as these contingents, serving Napoleon as they did under compulsion, were more enemies than friends, and could scarcely be reckoned upon in a critical moment, and the first reverse that might befall Napoleon's arms would be, as in fact actually did happen, the signal for open desertion*), then the opposing armies would have been nearly equal in numbers.

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* On the 30th of December, 1812, after the disastrous retreat of the Grand Army from Moscow, the Prus-

In the absence of Napoleon the French army in Lithuania, under the command of such men as the heroic Ney, Davoust, the hero of Auerstadt, the dauntless Murat, Victor, Macdonald, St. Cyr, Oudinot, and the gallant Poniatowski (for there is no doubt that Napoleon would have left the pick of his marshalls to oppose the Russians in Lithuania), and supported by Augereau advancing from the Oder, would have made good head against the Russian legions. The hardened veterans of Pultusk, of Eylau and Ostrolenka would doubtless have weathered the severe winter of 1812-13, secure in their quarters at Wilna and on the line of the Niemen.

Even a defeat on the Niemen would not, we think, have so seriously affected the strategic situation of the French army between that river and the Vistula that Napoleon could not easily have retrieved, in the spring of 1813, the whole military position by a great victory over the Russians between the Vistula and the Niemen. On Napoleon's return to Poland in the spring of 1813, with a practically intact army either on the Niemen or the Vistula, with a reorganised commissariat, his position would have been infinitely stronger than actually was the case in the summer of 1812.

If under these circumstances Napoleon had invaded Russia in March, let us say, in June at the latest, he would have been master of St. Petersburg or Moscow

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sian General York, in command of the Prussian contingent that had formerly served under Macdonald in Courland, concluded the convention of Potscherau with the Russian General Diebitch, which was really tantamount to open defection to Napoleon's cause and the secession of the entire Prussian forces to the side of the Russians.

three months earlier than when he entered the ancient capital of Russia.

To have reached his goal three months earlier than he did would have made all the difference to Napoleon, as with full three months of good weather to his credit he would have been in a position either to dictate to the Czar, or, a very improbable event, to retreat, if the exigency occurred, with comparatively little loss into Polana, for long before the winter had set in the Grand Army would have reached the shores of the Niemen. The snows of November and December (whatever some historians postulate to the contrary) did more towards the diminution and sufferings of the Grand Army than the united battalions of the vast empire of the Czars.

CHAPTER II.

Battle of Mohilow—Napoleon occupies Witepsk—Reflections—Napoleon's advance upon Smolensko—Burning and capture of Smolensko—Description of Smolensko—Napoleon's resolution to advance upon Moscow.

As already stated, the strength of the Russian forces actually in the field at the commencement of hostilities amounted to fully 265,000 men, divided into three distinct armies, and were distributed as follows :—The first and by far the most considerable, designated the First Army of the West, under the command of Barclay de Tolly, had its headquarters at Wilna and, including the forces under Whittgenstein, consisted of not less than 153,000 men; the second, or the Second Army of the West, under Bagration and lying considerably to the left of Barclay de Tolly, mustered 59,000 men, while still farther to the left was the army of reserve, "the Army of Volhynia," commanded by Tormasoff, nearly 53,000 strong.

The object of Napoleon was to separate Bagration from Barclay de Tolly, therefore, when marching upon Wilna, he advanced his centre to effect this object, and Bagration in consequence retired, pursued by Jérome Bonaparte, who, however, through his want of vigour, failed to cut off his retreat. The failure of Jérome so incensed Napoleon that he superseded him by Davoust. Bagration now retired to Mohilow, but Davoust, being already in possession of that town, a severe action here took place on the 23rd of July between Davoust and Bagration, in which, after an obstinate resistance, the Russian General was repulsed, with the result that he was obliged to retire to Novo-Bichow, where he crossed

the Dnieper and by a circuitous route continued his retreat through Borissow and Liday, with the view of joining Barclay either at Witepsk or Smolensko.

On the 28th of June Barclay de Tolly, after Napoleon's occupation of Wilna, fell back upon the entrenched camp of Drissa on the Dwina, arriving there on the 9th of July, but owing to Napoleon's advance, which threatened to sever his communications with Bagration and the heart of the empire he, on the 14th of July, broke up from his entrenchments and retreated with great celerity to Poltosk, and from thence to Witepsk, which city he reached on the 23rd of July.

Napoleon, having left Wilna on the 16th of July, arrived at Ostrowno, near Witepsk, on the 25th of the same month and on the 27th, after an indecisive action between the French cavalry and the Russian infantry, the whole Russian army, fully 82,000 strong, took up its position on an elevated plain before Witepsk, and Napoleon, overjoyed at the long-sought opportunity of a pitched battle, made every preparation for the conflict which he felt confident would be waged on the morrow, and at nightfall his last words to Murat were :—" To-morrow at five, the sun of Austerlitz !" The sun of Austerlitz, forsooth ! Early in the morning of the 28th, when Murat advanced to reconnoitre the enemy's position, he found their camp entirely deserted. Later the Russian army was descried by Eugene Beauharnais retreating over the plain towards Smolensko. In the night of the 27th Barclay had received intelligence through one of Bagration's aides-de-camp that owing to the check he had received at Mohilow he was unable to join the former at Orcha, in consequence of which he was retiring towards Smolensko. Upon the receipt of this news Barclay decided to abandon Witepsk and effect a

junction with Bagration under the walls of that great fortress. Thus had Napoleon, in spite of all his efforts, failed in his endeavour to prevent a junction of the two Russian armies or to effectually crush Barclay in a general engagement before Witepsk.

On the 28th of July Napoleon took up his quarters at Witepsk, precisely one month after his entry into Wilna, and here, as at Wilna, he made another protracted stay of fifteen days, not resuming the offensive until the 13th of August. Thus without even fighting a battle (the action at Mohilow, waged fully 200 miles from the lines of his advance, having in no way retarded the progress of the Grand Army), and inclusive of the time lost at Wilna, and Gloubokoie, it had taken him over a month to cover 250 miles, the distance between Kowno and Witepsk, a progress which, if compared with the celerity of his advance in his previous campaigns, seems decidedly slow.

In the campaign of Marengo Napoleon conquered Italy in a month. Although it is true that the distance between the northern slopes of the Great St. Bernard and the plain of Marengo is considerably less than half that which separates Kowno from Witepsk, yet the difference in these distances was fully counterbalanced by the difficulties encountered and the time taken up by the Consular army in its passage of the St. Bernard, as well as by the opposition it met with at the fort of St. Bard and at Montebello. In 1805 the time taken by Napoleon in his march from Straburg to Austerlitz, a distance of fully 500 miles, was only two months and five days, and his progress into Austria was considerably retarded by the operations consequent upon the investment and capitulation of Ulm. The campaign of Jena lasted less than three weeks, from the time Napoleon crossed the Rhine

to his triumphant entry into Berlin, and the distance between the Rhine and the Prussian capital is nearly 300 miles. True, the Polish war of 1807 lasted seven months from the time Napoleon left Berlin on the 25th of November, 1806, to his interview with Alexander I. at Tilsit on the 25th of June, 1807, yet the distance which his army covered in this campaign was fully 550 miles, and its advance stubbornly contested by the Russians in eight pitched battles, six of which, Czarnowo, Pultusk, Golymin, Landsberg, Eylau, and Ostrolenka, were waged in the depth of winter. In the campaign of 1809 Napoleon traversed 400 miles, from the Rhine to Vienna, in a month, and this stupendous campaign, up to the battle of Wagram, was terminated in less than three months, although his advance was interrupted by the hard-fought battles at Landshut, Eckmühl, and Ratisbon, and several lesser engagements.

To what causes was this tardy advance of Napoleon from the Niemen to the Dwina, and his inexplicable halt of nearly three weeks at Wilna and six days at Gloubokoie ascribable? Had he lost his wonted energy? Was he no longer the matchless soldier of Marengo, Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Eckmühl, and Wagram? In short, had his military genius, his mental vigour, his operative energy deteriorated after sixteen years of warfare? Had he lost the terrible initiative which erstwhile had paralysed the mightiest coalitions? We think not, although the first signs of a mental and physical deterioration, which was subsequently manifest in 1815 after his exile in Elba, are to be traced to this epoch of his career. His subsequent campaign in Saxony and his glorious defence of France in 1814 prove that neither his mental vigour nor his military genius had in any way deteriorated to any sensible degree.

Therefore the comparative slowness of his march from Kowno to Witepsk was in no wise assignable to an appreciable lessening of any of these attributes, but was due mainly to the inadequacy of the commissariat, the want of magazines for the support of his enormous army (which in a measure was the cause of the loss of so many precious days at Wilna), and to the barren nature of the country which it had to traverse, laid into a desolate waste by the Russians in their retreat. Although numerous convoys accompanied the Grand Army, yet they were utterly insufficient to meet its requirements, and only tended to impede its advance. The consequence was that, owing to lack of provisions (for half the army was in a state of semi-starvation), confusion, pillage and insubordination reigned on the rear and flanks of the Grand Army.

It was not, however, through lack of foresight on Napoleon's part that this state of affairs obtained, for long before he left Paris he had made immense preparations for the provisioning of his army, well knowing that his system for its sustenance by plunder and making "war support war," which in all his former campaigns, in the populous and fertile plains of Italy, Germany and Prussia, had proved so successful, could hardly obtain in the desolate, uncultivated, and sparsely populated plains of Russia. In spite of the enormous contracts which General Clarke, his minister for war, had entered upon, yet such was the mismanagement of affairs, and so great the distance which the numerous convoys and trains of cattle had to travel to reach the Niemen, and so inveterate was the swindling on the part of the Polish Jews, that owing to the shortage of provisions, long before Napoleon reached Witepsk the army was put on half rations, and fully 30,000 men, on its flanks and rear,

were literally in a state of starvation, their only means of subsistence being the flesh of overdriven animals and bad water. Therefore the long delay at Wilna is to a certain degree accounted for, as well as the precious time he again lost at Witepsk, but however justified Napoleon may have been in making these halts, owing to the deplorable state of his commissariat, yet to have lost *thirty-nine* days at the outset of a campaign (eighteen at Wilna, six at Gloubokoie, and fifteen at Witepsk) seems for Napoleon, even granting the great difficulties that beset him, truly inexplicable, particularly if we consider the lateness of the season and the great distance he had still to cover to reach Moscow.

It was during Napoleon's halt at Witepsk that he was apprised of the treaties ratified by the Czar with Turkey and Sweden, as well as of the conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive between Russia and England. This intelligence, coupled with the vast preparations which the Czar was making for the defence of his empire and the patriotic spirit displayed by the Russian people, gave rise to serious reflections at headquarters, and at a military council several of his generals strongly advocated a discontinuance of the advance, but Napoleon's view was very different, his fiery spirit could not brook the thought of having recourse to a defensive policy, and the probability of at least eight months of inaction at Witepsk or Wilna was a prospect utterly repugnant to his aggressive nature, and this feeling in him, we think, will be fully appreciated when we consider that throughout his whole career of warfare never once had he receded one step except at Acre, and that the longest pause he had ever made in any of his campaigns, and which lasted four months, was that which ensued after Eylau, and which was solely ascribable to the terrible shock he

sustained in that stupendous struggle. His resolution to push on to Moscow and not to unsheath his sword until in possession of the Kremlin was after all sufficiently excusable if we take into account the astonishing results of his previous campaigns, for how could he possibly have foreseen the dire results of this war, or entertained the possibility of its issue, once Moscow was in his power, being anything but overwhelmingly successful? Besides, was it probable that without having fought a battle he would now relinquish his march upon Moscow and postpone the war until the ensuing spring? Even the slaughter of Eylau did not check the ultimate advance of his legions to the Niemen, and the blow at Aspern in no way reduced his intrepidity or his resolution to utterly prostrate the mighty empire of the Hapsburgs, and in spite of Eylau and Aspern, were the results of any of his previous wars more glorious or decisive than those that followed the peace of Tilsit or Schoenbrunn? If, therefore, the butchery of Eylau and the defeat of Aspern failed to reduce his self-assurance or to arrest his march of conquest, surely it would have been extraordinary if now, at the head of nearly half a million of men, and without having crossed swords with the enemy, he had desisted from a further advance.

Nevertheless, in spite of Napoleon's excellent reasons and the plausibility of his views for a continuance of the campaign, it would have been well for him had he followed the advice of his lieutenants and postponed his march upon Moscow until the following spring, or even better, had he fallen back upon Wilna and the line of the Niemen, for there, in this strong position, secure in cantonments, his army, even during his absence, would have been practically invincible. A cessation of hostilities (for it is very improbable that, upon his retreat

to the Niemen the Russians would have adopted an offensive policy owing to his immense resources, which would have precluded the possibility of an attack upon his army being attended with any decisive success) would have enabled him to recuperate his army, reorganise Poland (if not re-establish her independence), and even to utterly subdue Spain and Portugal, and these mighty undertakings, we think, would have been sufficiently momentous to have given, during the ensuing eight months, full play to the copious energy of his mind, and without doubt have been his salvation.

Napoleon's arguments in favour of a continuance of the campaign were truly characteristic of the man, and in the words he addressed to his generals his unbounded self-assurance was clearly manifested. To terminate the campaign a great battle, he said, would have to be fought, and naturally enough to him a great battle was synonymous to a great victory. The capture of Moscow would mean the complete overthrow of Russia; now was the time to strike, in another eight months it would be too late. Why halt at Witepsk when in a month everything that was needed would be found at Moscow? To desist now, in August, from a further advance would be folly, and, moreover, demoralising to the army, especially to the French soldiers, whose impetuous spirit, never more buoyant than when on the march, was unsuited to a long and wearisome time of inaction. To retreat to Wilna would be fatal, and would involve the loss of Lithuania, dispirit the army, and be viewed by the enemy as a moral defeat. In this address is revealed not merely Napoleon's self-confidence, but moreover his dogged resolution to persevere to the very end in any enterprise he may ever have entered upon, even in the face of well-nigh insuperable difficulties, as in the

campaign of Eylau and Wagram, and not to recede one step from any conquest until the conclusion of a glorious peace. And yet that he entertained, at first, a notion of wintering at Wilna, and that he harboured some doubts as to the advisability of a further advance, that year at all events, seems surmisable enough, judging from the following declaration which he made at Witespk:— "We shall not commit the folly of Charles XII.," he said; "let us plant our eagles here. The campaign of 1812 is over, in 1813 we shall march upon Moscow and in 1814 to St. Petersburg." A wise resolution! but one which, unfortunately for him, he did not keep to; had he done so how different would have been his destiny to what it was destined to be, as well as that of the universe besides!

At last Napoleon decided to resume the offensive, and on the 13th of August he left Witepsk at the head of his concentrated forces and advanced upon Smolensko. A slight reverse which Platoff, the redoubtable Hetman of the Cossacks, inflicted upon Murat's advance guard under Sebastini at Inkowo, on the 8th of August, conjoined with the ominous news which he had recently received at Witepsk with regard to the vast military and political combinations formed against him, made it obvious that a further loss of time would be fraught with serious consequences, and indeed the fatal results of this war were in a great measure attributable to the precious days he had already lost at Wilna and at Witepsk.

In marching upon Smolensko Napoleon's design was to anticipate the enemy there, and by this move to cut the Russian army in two and at the same time to intercept it from the road to Moscow. Whilst crossing the wooded ridge that separates Witepsk from Smolensko Napoleon beheld for the first time the upper waters of

the Dnieper. The sight of this great river filled him with a transport of joy; he seemed now to have reached the uttermost confines of the West, and a wild exultation stirred the unfathomable depths of his soul, as visions of Oriental conquests passed before his mind; he seemed to inhale the delectable air of Persia's scented groves.

On the 13th August, the very day he left Witepsk, Napoleon reached the shores of the Dnieper and crossed that river into Old Russia. On the 14th his advanced guard, under Ney and Murat, overtook General Newerofskei, with the Russian rearguard, at Krasnoi, and after a heroic resistance the Russians were driven back to Korytnia, with the loss of eleven hundred men and five pieces of cannon. Advancing along the left bank of the Dnieper, Napoleon came in sight of Smolensko on the 16th, and beheld, on the opposite shore, the Russian army under Barclay de Tolly. To Napoleon a great battle seemed imminent, and the Russian army in his power. "At last I have got them!" he exclaimed as he gazed with rapturous joy upon that army which but so recently eluded him at Witepsk. But as at Witepsk, he was once more doomed to disappointment, as Barclay, determined to avoid a general engagement, retired to the north of Smolensko, there to join hands with Bagration. In the meantime Newerofskoi, after his retreat to Korytina, succeeded in uniting his shattered forces with those of Raeffskoi, and both generals decided to throw themselves into Smolensko, and defend that city until the arrival of Barclay and Bagration at the head of their united armies. They had not long to wait, however, for shortly after the first assault on the citadel by the French, in the early morning of the 16th, the whole Russian army, 120,000 strong,

under Barclay and Bagration (these generals having at last effected a junction), was seen advancing to their relief, and Bagration, having effected an entrance into Smolensko from the north, was enabled to reinforce the worn-out garrison, but as Barclay had no mind of hazarding a battle, he resolved to abandon Smolensko and retire towards Moscow, leaving only a sufficient garrison behind to enable his troops to effect their retreat in safety.

While the main Russian army, under Bagration, was retreating in the early morning of the 17th towards Moscow, Napoleon was making dispositions for a general attack upon Smolensko, now defended by a garrison of only 30,000 men. Accordingly, early on the 17th he ordered a furious attack to be made on the suburbs, which were eventually carried, and the gallant defenders driven within the walls of the city. During the assault on the suburbs the Russian soldiers set fire to the city, which, consisting mostly of wooden buildings, burnt with extraordinary fury, and all that night the heavens were illumined by the mighty conflagration, and next morning, the 18th, scarcely a vestige remained of that once noble city but blackened walls and the charred bodies of the dead. Scarcely a human being was to be seen, and the few inhabitants that still remained had taken refuge in the stately old cathedral and a few churches which had withstood the devastating flames. No provisions, no booty, and no magazines fell into the hands of the victors, and the only trophies which Napoleon could boast of were 200 pieces of cannon. During the night of the 17th, and while the conflagration was at its height, the Russian garrison, with the greater part of the populace, had evacuated Smolensko, destroying all the magazines in their retreat

and breaking down the bridges over the Dnieper. Useless though Napoleon's conquest was, yet, from a moral standpoint, the capture of Smolensko was an event of no small consequence, as the loss of this strong fortress, the bulwark of Old Russia, was a blow keenly felt by the Russian soldiers and the nation as well.

Before its destruction Smolensko contained about 12,000 inhabitants. The town is built on two hills and the intervening valley through which flows the Dnieper, which was here crossed by two bridges and was surrounded by walls 35 feet high and 18 feet thick, surmounted by thirty lofty towers, the circumference of the walls being about five miles. The houses were mostly of wood, and the city was divided by one long straight street, all the others being circular and covered with planks. On an eminence stands the fine cathedral with its great golden domes, an object of deep veneration to all Russians. The city, with its grotesque towers, lofty steeples, smiling gardens, verdant meadows and cornfields within the walls, made, before its capture by Napoleon, a truly beautiful, varied and fantastic picture.

Napoleon remained four days among the ruins of Smolensko. These four days, however, he spent to great advantage in securing his communications with the Niemen and the Rhine. He ordered Marshall Victor, with 30,000 men, to advance to Smolensko from the Niemen, and committed the whole of Lithuania to his charge. Augereau, with 52,000 men, now advanced from the Elbe and the Oder, and occupied the whole of Eastern Prussia as far as the Niemen. At the same time the French National Guard moved from the fortresses on the Rhine to those on the Elbe, and finally a new levy of 120,000 men was raised in France as an army of reserve for the defence of the mother country.

With this vast chain of communication, stretching across the whole of Europe from the Seine to the Dnieper, and eventually to the Moskwa, a distance of nearly sixteen hundred miles, Napoleon's power seemed irrevocably riveted over the entire continent, and the success of the campaign—the fate of Russia—assured.

In Napoleon's strategic measures in 1812 military despotism had reached its apogee. Who could have conceived it possible at that time that in less than three months the vast edifice of his power would be shattered to its very foundations, and his superb army, ere long, exist no more? Even now the suddenness of his stupendous fall seems hardly credible, particularly if we consider the enormous resources at his disposal, which seemed to preclude the possibility of this war being anything but completely successful, or of a dissolution of his apparently irresistible power ever taking place.

The hope was entertained at headquarters that after the capture of Smolensko Napoleon, owing to the lateness of the season, would defer his march upon Moscow until the following spring, and establish his army in cantonments on the line of the Dwina and Dnieper, fortify Smolensko and Witepsk, and afterwards take possession of Riga and reorganise Poland. Undoubtedly such a course of action was the one he should have adopted, as his army, after its long and tedious march through the barren and inhospitable plains of Lithuania, needed a rest. While his army was enjoying its well-earned repose secure in its strong position, he would have had leisure to thoroughly reorganise his commissariat and attend to the legislative affairs of Poland. Thus his army, amply provided for and thoroughly recuperated, would have passed the severe winter of 1812-

13 in security, and would have been exposed to no greater risks than those which the veterans of Pultusk and Eylau had to face on the Passarge in the winter of 1807, and Napoleon's ruin and the salvation of Russia— the liberation of Europe, was undoubtedly due to his disdaining to adopt those measures which five and a half years before ensured him the triumph of Friedland and the bewildering results of the peace of Tilsit.

In spite of the persuasions of his marshals to refrain from a further advance that year Napoleon, with a perverseness, which in a way can be forgiven if we consider the successful issue of all his previous wars but which now led him to his downfall, resolved to continue his march on Moscow. It was in vain that Berthier, Caulincourt, and Count Lobau pointed out the urgency of a halt, the risks that would be incurred by such an extended line of communication which an occupation of Moscow would necessitate, the dysentry that was prevalent in the army, and the deplorable condition of the soldiers. It was in vain they reminded him of the advanced time of the year and the danger of leaving Prussia, Austria, and Sweden so far behind in his rear. Their remonstrances, their prayers, were of no avail, and fell on deaf ears, and his only reply was, " One day in Moscow and every difficulty will vanish. There we shall find abundance and a glorious peace." Thus, casting all prudence to the winds, and as though impelled by the irresistible hand of Fate, Napoleon rushed headlong to his doom.

CHAPTER 111.

Battle of Valutino—Retreat of the Russians upon Moscow—Napoleon defeats the Russians at Borodino—Napoleon before Moscow—Reflections.

On the 19th of August, the day after the capture of Smolensko, Napoleon directed Ney in pursuit of the retreating Russians, and before daybreak, by the light of the burning city, that gallant marshal crossed over to the right bank of the Dnieper by a bridge constructed during the previous night, and marching on the Moscow road, soon came up with the last divisions of the Russian rearguard strongly posted on the heights of Valutino. Ney at once attacked the enemy with great vigour, and both sides being now strongly reinforced, a terrible encounter was soon in progress, the result of which was for a long time kept in the balance by the heroic resistance of the Russians, until a brilliant charge, led by General Gudin, decided the day in favour of the French. In the night the Russians retreated unmolested upon Moscow. This battle opened the road to Moscow to Napoleon, but at the same time, owing to its protracted and stubborn nature, it enabled the main Russian army under Barclay to effect its retreat in safety.

The battle of Valutino was the most brilliant feat of arms in the whole campaign, but the French had to mourn the death of the gallant Gudin, who was struck down by a cannon-shot while leading his division to the charge, and eight thousand men killed and wounded, while the losses sustained by the Russians were General Touchkoff, who was made prisoner in the midst of his staff by a furious charge of the French cavalry, and six thousand killed and wounded. Early the next morning

Napoleon visited the field of battle, and with his own hands delivered an eagle to the 127th Regiment and distributed decorations to the men of those corps which had particularly distinguished themselves on the field of battle, and with words of praise he revived the enthusiasm of the soldiers. "With such men," he exclaimed, "you might conquer the world; this is the most glorious of our fields; the dead have won immortal glory."

It was during Napoleon's halt at Smolensko that he received the intelligence of two important successes which attended his arms on either flanks of the Grand Army. The day before he quitted Witepsk, on the 12th of August, Schawartzenberg, who commanded the Austrian contingent on the extreme right, defeated Tormasoff on the Styr. In this battle the Russians lost four thousand men and several pieces of cannon, but owing to the lack of vigour with which the Austrians followed up their advantage, Tormasoff contrived to effect his retreat in good order behind the Styr. Nevertheless, this victory, indecisive as it was, secured Napoleon's communications with his rear, and saved the Grand Duchy of Warsaw from invasion.

Simultaneously with Napoleon's first attack on Smolensko and his entry into that city, namely, on the 17th and 18th, of August, an obstinate battle was fought at Poltosk, on the left of the Grand Army, which ultimately terminated in a victory for the French, the Russians, under Wittgenstein, retreating with a loss of seven guns and two thousand men, who fell prisoners in the hands of the victors. Owing to the ability he displayed on the second day of the battle, when he succeeded Oudinot, who was severely wounded, the successful issue of which was entirely ascribable to his energetic measures and able generalship, Napoleon raised St. Cyr

to the rank of Marshal of the Empire. These successes on both wings of his army inspired Napoleon with additional confidence and intensified his resolution to march upon Moscow.

On the 22nd of August Napoleon left the smoking walls of Smolensko, and on the 30th his headquarters were at Wiazma; on the 2nd of September at Gjask, and on the 5th he found himself in the presence of the Russian army, under Kutusoff, strongly posted at Borodino, a village seventy miles west of Moscow.

The fall of Smolensko and the continued retreat of the Russian armies towards Moscow had filled the whole Russian nation with dismay, and the authorities at St. Petersburg at last resolved that a stand should be made for the defence of Moscow; therefore, to appease the general discontent and satisfy the impatience of the soldiers who were protesting loudly against a further retreat, Barclay, who after the battle of Valutino had retired to Gjask, decided to offer battle to the French at this place, but scarcely had he resolved upon this step when he was superseded by the aged veteran Kutusoff, the same who nearly seven years before commanded the ill-starred legions of Russia and Austria in the disastrous campaign of Austerlitz. The nomination of Kutusoff, the conqueror of the Turks, the darling of the soldiers, to the supreme command was received by the Russian people with transports of joy, and they awaited with confidence the result of the great battle which was now to be waged in defence of their ancient capital, and upon which the fate of the country might possibly depend.

The position which the Russian army occupied was an exceptionally strong one. Its extreme right rested on the river Moskwa and a wood defended by field

works. Its front was protected by a deep ravine, through which flowed a little stream, the Kolotza, an affluent of the Moskwa. Its left stretched as far as the village of Semenowskoi, the approach to which was covered by broken ravines. In the centre, on an elevated plain, a league and a half away, stood the village of Borodino. At various points intrenchments had been thrown up, especially on the left and in the centre. On the sloping banks of the Kolotza, and on the extreme left, strong batteries had been placed, while nearly in the centre an eminence, crowned by a strong redoubt, commanded the whole plain in front of the army, and at some distance, in advance of the whole position, a second redoubt had been erected on a height to arrest the first onset of the enemy. Barclay de Tolley commanded on the right, Bennigsen in the centre, and Bagration on the left. The ground which the Russian army occupied did not exceed two miles from right to left, and within the restricted space 140,000 men with 640 guns were massed together, prepared to contend to the last extremity for the independence of the empire.

The French army, consisting of 133,000 men and 590 guns, had arrived before the Russian position in three columns, headed by Murat. It had passed to the right the vast convent of Kolotskoi, covered with coloured tiles, which, reflecting the rays of the sun, tended to enhance by its brilliant appearance the lugubrious aspect of the surrounding scenery, and soon came in sight of the Russian host densely massed beyond the Kolotza and on the heights of Somenowskoie.

At about two o'clock in the afternoon Napoleon, followed by his staff, and accompanied by Eugene Beauharnais, advanced to reconnoitre the enemy's position, and from an eminence he carefully surveyed the ground

occupied by the Russian army, humming the while an insignificant tune, and with that intuition which had so often decided the issue of so many battles, immediately resolved upon his plan of action, after which he conversed for some time with Eugene, then mounting his horse, he rode off to consult with Davoust upon the course of action he had determined upon.

At a glance Napoleon had seen that the first step to be taken was to seize the redoubt in front of the enemy's position, defended by ten thousand men and twelve pieces of heavy artillery. After a furious attack led by Murat, Compans and Poniatowski, and after having been four times taken and retaken, eventually it remained, before night, in the hands of the French.

It was while the contest was raging around the redoubt that Napoleon was apprived of the rout of Salamanca —ominous news; the first presage of his impending fall! Napoleon spent nearly the whole of that night dictating orders, and only allowed himself a few hours' repose, and at daybreak, on the 6th, he mounted his horse, and riding to the heights in front, carefully inspected the whole Russian position. Just before dawn some rain had fallen, but at five o'clock the clouds dispersed and the sun shone forth in full splendour, and as its dazzling rays fell upon the glittering arms of the two hostile armies, Napoleon, who, from an eminence in front, surrounded by his marshals, was still reconnoitering the enemy's position, turning towards his soldiers, exclaimed, as though inspired: "It is the sun of Austerlitz!" He was mistaken: it was not the sun of Austerlitz, its resplendent disk portending far different results to those which were premonished by the flaming orb of Austerlitz. The guerdon of Austerlitz was Presburg

and the suzerainty of Europe, that of Borodino the pyre of Moscow and irremediable ruin.

Scarcely had Napoleon pronounced these words when the trumpets sounded and the drums beat and the following proclamation was read to the troops: "Soldiers! the battle is at nand which you have so long desired. The victory depends on yourselves. . . It will yield you abundance, good winter quarters, and a speedy return to your country. Conduct yourselves as you did at Austerlitz, Friedland, and Smolensko, and the most remote posterity will recount with pride your actions on this day. . . Let it be said in Europe he was in that great battle under the walls of Moscow!" These stirring words were received by reiterated acclamations from the soldiers, and every heart throbbed with enthusiasm in anticipation of the great battle that was to decide the issue of the campaign, but which, nevertheless, was not to be fought until the following day, and the whole of the 6th was spent by the two rival hosts in preparing for the terrific encounter to be waged on the morrow.

At six o'clock on the following morning, the 7th of September, Napoleon opened fire on the Russian left with 120 pieces of cannon, which was immediately followed by a furious attack from the French right, led by Davoust with the divisions of Rapp and Compans in the face of a tremendous fire from the Russian batteries. In this attack all three generals were severely wounded, and the soldiers, thus deprived of their leaders, were for the moment thrown into a state of indecision, but the timely arrival of Ney and Murat, with seventy pieces of cannon and ten thousand cavalry, soon revived their enthusiasm, and the redoubts on the Russian left were finally carried.

Meanwhile Eugene, in the centre, had made himself master of Borodino, and was preparing to assail the great redoubt in the centre of the Russian line. As the issue of the battle depended upon the capture of the heights of Semenowskoi, the key of the Russian position, which were defended by Bagration, Ney, Murat, Friant, and Latour-Maubourg attacked the enemy there and drove them from the plateau, but the arrival of the Russian Guard and reserves for a time restored the contest in favour of the Russians; however, just as Ney and Murat were on the point of giving way, they were supported by the reserves and eighty guns under Lauriston, and after a furious attack by Ney and Murat the plateau of Semenowskoi remained in possession of the French. Had Napoleon at this juncture brought the Imperial Guard into action, as Murat strongly urged him to do, the Russian army would have suffered a crushing defeat, and Borodino might have been a second Austerlitz.

At first sight it seems that Napoleon cannot be absolved for keeping back his reserves, and by such a step failing to convert a Pyrrhic victory into what otherwise would unquestionably have been an overwhelming triumph, but if we regard this question in the light in which Napoleon viewed it, then it is clear he was thoroughly justified in acting as he did, and the reasons he adduced on the night of the battle, and again years later at Saint Helena, for not having brought the Imperial Guard into action, were sufficiently specious. He fully anticipated a second battle, and therefore contented himself with the advantage he had gained, withholding the Imperial Guard for the contest which he was confident would be fought in front of Moscow. Besides, to have imperilled, nay, possibly sacrificed his

reserves at such a distance from his supports, might have seriously jeopardised his position, and certainly augmented the disastrous results of the Russian retreat and probably endangered his personal safety as well.

Although by the capture of the heights of Semenowskoi a decided advantage had been gained, yet, with the great redoubt in the Russian centre still in the enemy's hands, the battle could hardly be considered as won. Accordingly Eugene, with General Bonami's division, attacked the great redoubt and drove Barclay from his entrenchments, but Kutusoff, having brought strong reinforcements, the assailants, after a desperate encounter, were driven in disorder upon their centre. In this attack General Bonami, with a part of his troops, was taken prisoner. Undismayed by the failure of this attack, Napoleon directed a second assault upon the great redoubt, led by Eugene, Augustus Caulincourt, and Montbrun, with 200 pieces of cannon, and after a terrific struggle the redoubt was carried, and with its capture the battle of Borodino may be said to have closed.

That Napoleon, from a technical standpoint, won the battle is true, but more than this he certainly could not claim, as strictly speaking the battle of Borodino was nearer a drawn battle than a victory, as Kutusoff only lost his first line of defence, and after his desperate resistance and the terrible losses he inflicted upon the French army, Napoleon was in no position to dislodge him from his entrenchments behind the heights of Semenowskoi, and there, with unbroken ranks, unmolested by the enemy, the Russian army, although reduced to nearly half its original strength, took up its position, and all that night the two rival hosts, like two exhausted wrestlers, faced one another, and not till the

next day did the Russians evacuate their position, retreating leisurely along the Moscow road.

The losses sustained by both armies in the battle were immense. On the side of the French they amounted to twelve thousand men killed and thirty thousand wounded; among the former were Generals Augustus Caulincourt and Montbrun and many others besides, and among the latter thirty generals. The Russian losses, no less severe, were fifteen thousand men killed, among which were General Bagration, who died of his wounds, and Generals Kaitaisoff and Touchkoff. The wounded numbered fully thirty thousand, and two thousand men had been made prisoners by the French. The latter lost ten pieces of cannon and the Russians thirteen.

It would have been as well for Napoleon had he not won the battle of Borodino, for the prize of victory—the capture of Moscow, proved more fatal to him than would have been the consequences of the most complete defeat, for with his entry into Moscow his doom was sealed, whereas a check or even a defeat at Borodino would not necessarily have meant his ruin and the liberation of Europe, but merely the deliverance of Russia, for the nonce, and a resumption of the war on the Dwina, where, reinforced by Victor and Augereau, and at the head of nearly 200,000 men, he would have been in a position to successfully oppose the advance of the Russian armies, and by a great victory have terminated the war before the close of the year. Better still, had he taken Ney's advice, and, although victorious, retreated either to Witepsk or Wilna, and in short have adopted a policy similar to that which proved his salvation after Eylau, and there have recuperated

himself for a resumption of hostilities in the following spring; but, as though allured by some irresistible influence, he pressed on to Moscow—his Tarpeian Rock, the precipice from which he was to be hurled to destruction.

Had Napoleon enjoyed better health at the battle of Borodino probably its results might have been very different to what they were. During the whole battle he evinced an apathy and lack of energy which for him seems extraordinary, and which was doubtless attributable to a severe attack of rheumatism, and such was his mental depression that at ten o'clock in the morning his spirits had to be sustained by strong stimulants. He who, in all his former battles, at Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, Eylau, Friedland, Aspern, Wagram, had exhibited such unbounded activity, whose iron constitution had never yet failed him, now at Borodino displayed a lassitude of mind and body which can scarcely be reconciled with the most energetic intellect of modern times. He remained, during the best part of the battle, on an eminence, from which he surveyed the whole scene of action "immovable, seated on the edge of a ditch, or walking to and fro over a small space."*

The Russians retreated only four miles from the field of battle, and in such admirable order that the French made no attempt at a pursuit. On the same day the French, under Murat, came up with the Russian rearguard at Mojaisk, and a severe engagement here took place, but owing to the stubborn nature of the contest and the gallant resistance which the Russians made, Kutusoff was able to retain possession of Mojaisk until the following morning and remove his artillery, his

* Mathieu Dumas.

magazines, and nearly all the wounded in safety on the road to Moscow, and when Napoleon entered Mojaisk on the 9th, hardly a trace was left of the retreating Russians.

Kutusoff continued his retreat in good order, and on the 13th, when about half a league from Moscow, he brought his army to a halt. It seemed as though a last stand would here be made for the defence of Russia's ancient capital, but after serious deliberations at headquarters, and chiefly through the persuasions of Kutusoff and Barclay, the abandonment of Moscow was resolved upon, the reason which both Kutusoff and Barclay adduced in favour of this measure being that the abandonment of Moscow would lead the enemy into a snare and would serve the national cause more efficiently than would the results of the most decisive victory. Therefore next morning, the 14th, Kutusoff continued his retreat, and that day his army defiled in silent grief through the deserted streets of Moscow, now abandoned to the mercy of the invaders.

Had Kutusoff been aware of the deplorable state to which the French army was reduced, there is no doubt he would have offered battle to Napoleon before Moscow, and that city might then never have been sacrificed, and Napoleon's fall is perhaps due to Kutusoff's ignorance of the real condition of the Grand Army after the slaughter of Borodino. It is a paradox that in abstaining from a battle the Russian commander achieved not merely the deliverance of his country, but contributed materially towards emancipating Europe from the conqueror's yoke, for it is questionable if Napoleon, owing to the shortage in the ammunition, which had been nearly all exhausted at Borodino, would have been victorious in a second battle, or if not actually

defeated its results would have been synonymous to those of a complete defeat. The loss of a battle would not necessarily have meant the overthrow of Napoleon, but at the utmost only the deliverance of Russia, whereas the occupation of Moscow and the precious days he lost there, coupled with the mighty conflagration that reduced that fair city to a heap of ruins, proved more efficacious in consummating his overthrow than anything that could have been conceived by mankind.)

At last, on the 14th of September, nearly three months after Napoleon crossed the Niemen into Russian territory, and on the same day that Kutusoff evacuated Moscow, the French army came in sight of that great city. From an eminence that dominates Moscow, designated the Hill of Salvation, Napoleon beheld the minarets and gilded cupolas of this half Oriental city. The sight of this superb metropolis shimmering in the morning sun imbued the French army with a transport of joy, and his marshals, who since Borodino, had manifested their dissatisfaction at a further advance by their sullen bearing, now, with Moscow before them and the incalculable results which the capture of this fair city seemed to promise, forgot their sufferings and pressed round their chief in tribute to his good fortune, which had fully atoned for his lethargy at Borodino and his lack of vigorous measures after that bloody battle, and ascribed the glorious termination of this arduous war to his all-provident genius.

At eleven o'clock Napoleon reached the Hill of Salvation. From this eminence the old capital of Russia, "Mother Moscow"—"Moscow of the Golden Cupolas," sanctified to all Russians as the last resting-place of Muscovy's ancient Czars, stretched before him, beau-

tiful in her half Oriental splendour, wonderous in the glory of an autumn sun.

Amidst the deafening cry of "Moscow! Moscow!" uttered by one hundred thousand throats, Bonaparte gazed intently upon the great mysterious, silent city, crowned by the lofty towers of the hoary Kremlin, the ancient palace of the Czars, and after a brief pause exclaimed: "Behold at last that celebrated city!" and added, as an after-thought, "it was time!" Yes, it was time! For close upon three months the Grand Army had wended its way through the limitless plains of Western Russia, and now that the goal at last was reached, the joy which animated Napoleon's wearied veterans, when the gilded domes and lofty spires of the great city appeared in view, may well be compared to that with which Columbus' mariners were imbued when with transfixed gaze they first descried the verdant shores of the New World.

Napoleon, on the Hill of Salvation, on the 14th of September, 1812, before Moscow, his short, square-set, aggressive figure, topped by the great three-cornered hat, in strong relief against the sky, stands forth full of portentous significance to history. With the form of the Conqueror thus delineated before us our thoughts digress into a channel of reflections.

This is the last occasion upon which Napoleon stood as conqueror before the gates of a foreign capital, Dresden excepted. As he gazed upon the stately city, emicant in the golden autumn light, little did he guess that in that fertile plain watered by the silvery Moskwa, behind those glittering domes, those gilded steeples, remorselessly awaiting him, was his Nemesis, that this great opulent city, this haven of refuge, would prove to be more than his Capua—the dam that was to stem

NAPOLEON BEFORE MOSCOW, FROM A PAINTING BY VERESTCHAGIN.

his tumultuous career of conquest, the shoal upon which his hopes, his mad dreams were to be for ever shattered.

Napoleon had stood as conqueror before nearly every capital between the Red Sea and the Baltic. Before his triumphal march, Milan, Venice, Cairo, Munich, Vienna, Berlin, Warsaw, Madrid, had all opened their gates to him, but the sight of none of these fair cities, we fancy, can have inspired his soul or affected his imagination as did the first view he obtained of Moscow, for now the Orient seemed already in view. There, overlooking the Kremlin, he seemed on the threshold of the Orient. The sight of those stately domes scintillating in the morning sun, must have awakened in his enigmatical soul many a memory, must have recalled to him the glorious days of his youth, maybe the happiest of his extraordinary life, when, as conqueror of Egypt, his name resounded from the Nile to the Ganges, when the East was all illumined by his genius. Moreover, was not Moscow the gate to India? Once master of Moscow, Russia would be at his feet, and this meant the eventual conquest of India, the overthrow of England—the mastery of the world!

Here we see that the seductive influence of the meretricious Orient affected Napoleon's imagination as forcibly as ever. If beyond Acre he saw the throne of the East awaiting him, if beyond Austerlitz and Tilsit he again saw the Orient in all its glory, now, beyond Moscow, he once more beheld the enchanted East, all resplendent, all-alluring, like a wondrous mirage before him—but for the last time! Fortune, with pitiless inconsistency, so willed that this transient vision of ulterior splendour in the realm of his heart's desire, that his hour of bright promise should be the premonition of his stupendous, irremediable overthrow.

CHAPTER IV.

Description of Moscow—Napoleon enters Moscow—Abandonment of Moscow by the Russians—Count Rostopchin—Napoleon establishes his headquarters in the Kremlin—Burning of Moscow—Critical State of the Grand Army—Reflections.

At the time of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, Moscow contained over 300,000 inhabitants, and was by far the most populous city in the Russian Empire, and in extent perhaps the largest in Europe, its circumference being about 26 miles. The city was divided into five distinct divisions, viz., the Kremlin, the Khitaigorod, or Chinese Town, the Bielgorod, or White Town, the Semlainogorod, and the Sloboda, or suburbs. The first of these divisions, the central and highest part of the city, contained the ancient palace of the Czars, from which it derived its name, several churches, two convents, and the ruins of an arsenal. The second contained the university, the printing house, tradesmen's shops, and numerous bazaars. The third and fourth consisted of a conglomeration of churches, convents, palaces, brick and wooden houses, and wretched hovels. The last comprised, the suburbs, and contained, besides buildings of all kinds, cornfields, open pastures, and many small lakes.

Owing to the heterogenous character of its architecture, Moscow at that time presented a truly unique picture. Splendid palaces, humble cottages, and stately mansions were indiscriminately blended together, above which towered the massive domes, some of copper, others of tin gilt or painted green, and lofty steeples,

crowned with gilded globes, of innumerable churches. The streets were in general very long and broad, some being paved, but those in the suburbs were nearly all formed with trunks of trees or covered with planks. Moscow at that time contained, including chapels, over 1,000 places of worship, 484 being public churches built in a peculiar style of architecture, and nearly all adorned with spacious terraces, and through this labyrinth of gorgeous palaces, magnificent mansions, stately churches, luxurious gardens, humble cottages and miserable houses, tne Moskwa wound its shallow course, and above all the Kremlin, in all its majesty, reared its crown of towers.

Such was the appearance of this great city at the beginning of the 19th century—"Holy Moscow"—"Mother Moscow," the Mecca of Russia! within whose sacred precincts the East and West seemed to affiliate, and the conquest of which had lured Napoleon from the uttermost confines of the West.

While Napoleon, from the Hill of Salvation, was contemplating the wonderful scene that stretched before him, his soul stirred to its very depths with dreams of Asiatic conquests, with the road to India, so to speak, open before him, Murat, who with the cavalry had advanced to the gates of Moscow, arrived with the information that he had held a parley with Milaradowitch, the commander of the Russian rearguard, who had declared that unless two hours were granted for the evacuation of Moscow he would set fire to the city: Napoleon at once complied with the demand.

The joy which animated Napoleon as he gazed upon the numerous steeples, gilded domes and cupolas of that superb city—Moscow, now at last in his grasp, was

soon succeeded by feelings of deep anxiety, for the city that stretched before him was in truth a city of the dead. Over the whole of this vast metropolis an unbroken silence reigned : not a single living being was to be seen on the battlements of its old walls and towers or issuing from its gates, and with the expiration of the two hours granted for the withdrawal of the Russian rearguard, Moscow still remained in its death-like silence. The hours rolled by, evening came, and still no message reached Napoleon, no deputation of citizens came forth to meet him. At last at nightfall, uneasy and greatly perplexed, he descended the Hill of Salvation and advanced towards Moscow. At the Dorogomilow gate he paused an instant as though he still expected to be met by a deputation of the citizens. Murat urged him to enter : " Very well, let us enter, as they seem to wish us to. Perhaps these people do not even know how to yield themselves, for everything is new, they to us, and we to them," replied Napoleon. It was night by the time he entered Moscow and established himself in a suburban palace, and early on the following morning when he took up his quarters within the silent and deserted walls of the Kremlin—the vast palace of the ancient Czars.

How different was Napoleon's entry into Moscow compared with his triumphal entry into Milan in 1796 after Lodi, and again in 1800 after Marengo! How different compared with his entry into Munich and Vienna in 1805 after the capitulation of Ulm! into Berlin in 1806 after Jena! into Posen and Warsaw in 1807! The occupation of Milan was the prelude to the treaties of Campo Formio and Luneville; of Munich and Vienna of the glorious peace of Presburg; of Berlin, Posen and Warsaw of the bewildering results of Tilsit;

but the occupation of Moscow presaged the rout of Leipzig, the abdication of Fontainebleau, the imprisonment of Elba, the overthrow of Waterloo—the agonies of Saint Helena.

The uneasiness which Napoleon felt at the abandonment of Moscow may well be viewed as a premonition of the terrible calamity that was to befall that fair city and of his portentous overthrow. The inhabitants of Moscow, incited by the measures adopted by the nobles and the example given by the governor, Count Rostopchin, resolved upon the destruction of their beloved city. On the approach of the French army from Smolensko, as early as the 3rd of September, Rostopchin had ordered the removal of the city archives and of the public chest, and, upon the news of the defeat at Borodino, of all the food supplies and whatever could be of any service to the invaders, and enjoined the nobles and principal merchants to quit the doomed city, and at the same time with his own hands he set fire to his beautiful country seat, the receptacle of priceless treasures worth half a million rubles. The abandonment of Moscow by the nobles, the civic authorities and merchants, who were followed in their flight by a vast multitude of despairing citizens, was the signal for the destruction of that venerated city, whose stately palaces, superb mansions, churches, public buildings and bazaars, were ere long to become the prey of the incendiary's brand.

By order of Rostopchin a quantity of combustibles, fuses, and explosives of every description had been deposited in the different buildings of the city, particularly in the shops, bazaars, and warehouses of the merchants' quarters. The fire-engines and pumps had all been either removed or destroyed, and in short Moscow

was bereft of everything that could be of any service in arresting a conflagration. On the last day, the 14th, Rostopchin had thrown open all the prisons, and a loathsome crowd of miserable wretches spread themselves in every direction, and to them was entrusted the duty of setting fire to Moscow. Rostopchin harangued these desperadoes, called them sons of Russia, and bade them expiate their crimes by serving their country, after which he quitted Moscow, the last to leave her deserted walls.

Murat, with the advance guard, had been the first to enter Moscow, and it was through silent and deserted streets that the conquerors made their entry into that vast metropolis, and with the exception of the loathsome rabble whom Rostopchin had liberated from the various prisons, not a single human being was to be seen throughout its spacious precincts. As though by enchantment Moscow was bereft of its inhabitants, which only a few days before numbered over 300,000 souls. A vast concourse of men and women loaded with their personal effects and carrying their sacred pictures, icons, and religious symbols, and dragging their children after them and preceded by priests, had left with the nobles and civic authorities, and when later the Russian rearguard defiled in mournful silence through the Kolomna gate it was accompanied by the residue of the inhabitants, and all the roads leading to Kazan, Voladimir, and Jaroslav, were covered, for a distance of forty leagues, with an immense throng of despairing fugitives, waggons, carriages, and vehicles of every description.

While the French army was advancing upon Moscow a species of flying machine of vast dimensions was

being constructed in the vicinity of that city by order of the Emperor Alexander, and under the supervision of a German aeronaut, whose intention had been to sail over the French host, single out its leader, and crush him with a shower of bombs and iron missiles. Several flights were attempted, but without success, owing to the repeated breaking of the springs with which the wings of the aerial machine were fitted. The scheme was in truth impracticable, nay, chimerical for that age. This incident, however, is interesting to touch upon, not merely in view of the extraordinary development of aerial navigation at the present time, but as illustrating the intension of the feeling of the Russian nation against Napoleon, and the desperate, nay, unscrupulous measures it was prepared to resort to to effect the liberation of the fatherland.

As already stated, it was night when Napoleon entered Moscow and took up his quarters in a suburban palace. At midnight he was awakened by the cry of fire! The chief market-place was in flames, the work of Kostopchin's emissaries. Early on the following morning, the 15th of September, and while the fire was still raging, and with the horizon obscured by dense columns of smoke, he, with the Imperial Guard, established himself in the Kremlin, and there wrote a letter to Alexander containing proposals for peace. The letter was despatched by a prisoner of rank, but no answer ever reached Napoleon.

By the exertions of the soldiery the fire was extinguished, but as night set in the flames burst out again, and towards midnight a brilliant light was seen by the sentinels at the Kremlin illuminating the northern and western parts of the city, and it was discovered that all that quarter of the vast metropolis was in flames.

Accelerated by a furious tempest, the conflagration spread to every part of the city; burning fragments were wafted through the hot air and fell in every direction, some on the roof, and in the courts of the Kremlin. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but a vast expanse of sibilant flames. The vivid glare of the conflagration awoke Napoleon, and from the battlements of the Kremlin he beheld, in silent gloom, the terrible yet sublime spectacle. What his sentiments were is impossible to conceive. He had beheld many a scene of horror, many a battle-field bestrewn with its myriads of dead, but never a scene like this. The burning of Smolensko was as naught compared with the mighty conflagration that reduced Moscow to a heap of ruins.

The dawn of the 16th found Napoleon still gazing upon the terrible spectacle, upon a horizon resplendent with surging billows of fire. From the battlements of the Kremlin he retired to his apartments, and there, in a state of great agitation, he paced from room to room; then turning abruptly he would seat himself for an instant, then as suddenly rise and again move to and fro with rapid steps. As he paused before a window to contemplate the progress of the conflagration, he exclaimed "What a terrible scene! Just like them! So many palaces! What extraordinary resolution! What men! These are indeed Scythians!" He was still pacing in great perturbation when his generals arrived and importunately urged him on their knees to leave the Kremlin, but in vain, all their prayers, all their entreaties were of no avail, nothing could induce him to abandon his conquest that had cost him a march of nearly three months' duration and the lives of at least two hundred thousand men, not even the roaring sea of flames by which he was

environed, and even when the cry arose that the Kremlin itself was on fire he could scarcely be persuaded to leave his quarters. Indeed there was no time to be lost. The window panes were burning hot, and the roofs of the Kremlin were covered with burning embers and flaming brands, which, in spite of all the efforts of the soldiery, accumulated with alarming rapidity. Before he left the Kremlin Napoleon commanded the trial and execution of the unfortunate wretches who, by order of Rostopchin, had set fire to Moscow: he then left the Kremlin by the northern staircase, famous for the massacred of the Strelitzi in the reign of Peter the Great, and through a sea of flames, through avenues of fire, retired to Petrowsky, the country palace of the Czar, one league distant on the St. Petersburg road, where he arrived before nightfall.

Early the next morning Napoleon gazed anxiously upon Moscow, hoping the conflagration had subsided, but he only beheld it raging with redoubled violence. That noble city, which only a few days before had stretched before him resplendent in all her regal beauty, was now a vast expanse of tumultuous flames, whose gleaming crests seemed to overspread the heavens to the zenith. For a long time he was absorbed in the contemplation of this awful scene, and at last, as though awakened from some terrible dream, he exclaimed: "This is a presage of great misfortunes." He was right; and yet little he guessed how prophetic these words were to be!

Napoleon remained three days at Petrowsky, and on the 20th, the conflagration having at last subsided, he returned to the Kremlin, which, through the efforts of the Imperial Guard, had been preserved from the

flames. His progress to the Kremlin was made through a wilderness of smoking ruins; on every side nothing was to be seen but blackened walls, piles of masonry, smouldering ashes, and burning debris. Costly furniture of every description, cashmeres, furs from Siberia, rich stuffs from India and Persia, silver plate, priceless jewelry, gold, and ornaments of every description, were indiscriminately scattered about, and probably such a scene of havoc, of indescribable confusion, had never yet been known in modern times, at least in Europe, and recalled the sack and destruction of some Asiatic city by tne ruthless conquerors of ancient history.

Once more established in the Kremlin, Napoleon flattered himself with the thought that the war was over, and that Alexander would of a necessity sue for peace. He therefore wrote a second letter to the Czar, which was forwarded to St. Petersburg by Prince Wolkonsky, and ne sent Lauriston to the headquarters of Kutusoff to treat for an armistice, and Murat had an interview with General Benningsen. The cordial reception which both generals received from the Russian commanders deluded Napoleon with the hope that Alexander had at last resolved to yield to his terms. In fancied security, therefore, he awaited a reply, but day after day, week after week, passed by without bringing him an answer to his proposals, and meanwhile, during this time of inaction, while he was losing so many precious days among the ruins of Moscow, his position was becoming hourly more precarious.

The peace with Turkey and Sweden had enabled the Czar to detach powerful reinforcements from Finland and Moldavia. In the north-west the army of Wittgenstein had been considerably augmented by the corps of Steinheil and the militia of St. Petersburg, and in the

south Tormasoff, reinforced by the army under Tchichagoff, had advanced in the direction of Minsk. To the south-west of Moscow Kutusoff was strongly posted at Taroutino, his army being hourly reinforced by enthusiastic recruits, among whom were Platoff, at the head of his redoubtable Cossacks of the Don. Thus, while Napoleon was lingering in Moscow buoyed up with the hope that Alexander was about to treat for peace, over one hundred thousand men were preparing to converge in his rear and intercept his communications with Central Europe. Moreover, the season was now far advanced, and the rigorous winter close at hand, and worse still, the French host, encamped within the walls of Moscow, was already suffering from the scarcity of provisions, that city being practically cut off from all food supplies by the depredatory incursions of the Cossacks, on the line of Napoleon's communications with his magazines at Smolensko and in Poland.

Insecure as Napoleon's position was, yet he had taken good care to keep open his communications with Poland and Central Europe. In his advance on Moscow he had posted Victor with 30,000 men at Smolensko, with the double purpose of protecting the rear of the Grand Army and, in case of necessity, of supporting St. Cyr on the Dwina. Augereau, with 52,000 men, was stationed in echelon in the rear of Victor, and occupied the whole of Eastern Prussia and the Grand Duchy of Warsaw; moreover, both flanks of his line of communication were safeguarded, on the Dwina by St. Cyr with the corps of Oudinot and the Bavarians opposed to Wittgenstein, and on the Styr by Schwartzenberg with the Austrian contingent confronting Tormasoff, who was soon to be joined by Tchichagoff from Bucharest. Nevertheless, in spite of all Napoleon's measures to

secure his line of communications with his rear and his magazines at Smolensko, Borissow, Minsk, and Wilna, yet it was with the utmost difficulty that Baraguay d'Hilliers, posted at Wizma, between Moscow and Smolensko, was able to maintain himself against the vigorous attacks of the enemy, and owing to the lack of magazines at that place he was ere long obliged to fall back upon Smolensko. Thus, at least since the end of September, the Grand Army had been virtually cut off from its line of retreat, and Napoleon in reality beleaguered in his own conquest.

However vast were the preparations which Napoleon made for the sustenance of his immense army, they were nevertheless inadequate for the requirements which the magnitude of the military operations of this campaign necessitated. For instance, with the exception of those established at Smolensko, there were no magazines of any description between Moscow and Borissow, a distance of nearly 400 miles. That Napoleon could be guilty of such negligence seems not a little surprising, and can only be accounted for by the fact that he never anticipated a retreat, but counted upon this campaign terminating with the most signal success, and can he be blamed for entertaining such a false hope, considering the bewildering results of all his previous wars? In truth unintermitted success had spoilt Napoleon and made him regard destiny as subservient to his will, hence his lack of precautionary measures after the capture of Smolensko and his fatal march upon Moscow after the butchery of Borodino.

During all this time, while his position in Moscow was growing hourly more intolerable, while his army, incarcerated under the towers of the Kremlin, was practically on the verge of starvation, cut off as it was from all

its magazines and depots at Smolensko and in Lithuania, Napoleon was living in a fool's paradise, duped with the hope that Alexander would eventually comply with his conditions, but as weeks passed by without bringing a reply to his proposals, and with the approach of the dreaded Russian winter with all its rigours, he at last no longer dissembled his anxiety, and resolved to hold a military council to deliberate upon the best course to be adopted in the face of the perilous position in which the Grand Army was situated.

Calmly and with solemn countenances the French marshals gathered round their chief. Various were the suggestions put forth. Murat, with his wonted impetuosity, suggested an immediate attack against Kutusoff; Daru, Napoleon's intendant, proposed that all the French detachments be called in, that every horse be killed and salted, all the cellars be used as dwelling-places, Moscow, or at least what remained of it, be converted into an entrenched camp, that the winter be spent among its ruins, foraging parties be sent out in every direction, and that during the winter months, at any rate, all communications with Poland, Central Europe, and France be broken off, and then the Grand Army, thoroughly recuperated and still entire, could issue forth from Moscow in the early spring. This scheme, which to say the least was sufficiently Quixotic, Napoleon vetoed, as being to his mind, and rightly, too, utterly impracticable, and presenting too many risks to be ever put into execution. As he truly remarked, were he immured for six months in Moscow, fourteen hundred miles from the frontiers of France, Prussia, Austria, and even his German vassals would undoubtedly throw off his yoke, and Russia in the meantime would have

accumulated such a prodigious host that his isolated army would indubitably have been overwhelmed by superiority of numbers. Napoleon's proposals were but little less chimerical, but nevertheless fully characterised his enterprising and aggressive nature. His first suggestion was to burn the remains of Moscow, march upon St. Petersburg, and join Macdonald, who was still in the neighbourhood of Riga; his second to move upon Novogorod or Kalouga; however, through the advice of his generals he ultimately abandoned these projects as unfeasible and presenting too many difficulties to surmount. The council in consequence, broke up without having arrived at any decision, and Napoleon, instead of deciding upon some immediate plan of action, chose rather to aggravate the peril in which his army was already placed by losing more precious days in Moscow, still beguiled by the fatal illusion that Alexander would ultimately comply with his terms.

As has already been pointed out, Napoleon committed several fatal mistakes in his advance upon Moscow. The first and most serious was to have made, at the initial stage of the campaign, such a protracted halt at Wilna, where he lingered eighteen days; the second to have wasted six more days at Gloubokoie, and not less than fifteen at Witepsk, a loss all told of thirty-nine days, when at the utmost he need not have lost more than eighteen days on his halts, say a week at Wilna, another at Witepsk, and certainly not more than four days at Gloubokoie, consequently he would have entered Moscow three weeks before the time he actually did, namely, on the 24th of August in lieu of the 14th of September, a gain in time not to be despised, particularly if the lateness of the season is taken into account,

and the retreat, allowing for the five weeks frittered away in Moscow, would have taken place on the 28th of September instead of on the 19th of October, in which case there is no doubt that the sufferings which the Grand Army endured would have been greatly mitigated.

To have lingered in Moscow for five weeks was little less than an act of insanity, as at the utmost Napoleon's stay in that city should not have exceeded a fortnight, and had this been the case, presuming he entered Moscow on the 24th of August, the retreat would have occurred as early as the 7th of September, the date upon which the battle of Borodino was fought. Having entered Moscow as late as he did, how much more essential was it that his sojourn there should have been abridged as much as possible? Under no circumstances should his stay in Moscow have exceeded a fortnight, and there is not the least shadow of a doubt that by lingering five weeks at Petrowsky and in the Kremlin, coupled with the precious time he had already lost en route at Wilna, Gloubokoie and Witepsk, he materially enhanced the incredible horrors which characterised the retreat of his attenuated legions through the desolate snow-bound plains of Western Russia. The ruddy glare which illumined the dawn of the 15th of September should have been a sufficient warning to Napoleon, and certainly his last view of Moscow should have been the one he obtained of that fated city on the morning of the 17th of September from the palace of Petrowsky.

However much Napoleon must be reprehended for the precious days he lost in Moscow, nevertheless, in a sense he may perhaps well be forgiven for permitting himself to be inveigled by fallacious hopes into such a

prolonged sojourn among the ruins of his ill-starred conquest. True, his capture of Moscow availed him nothing, but on the contrary, was in a measure undoubtedly the immediate cause of his undoing. Nevertheless, it was natural enough he should feel loth to abandon a conquest that had lured him sixteen hundred miles from Paris, entailed a march of practically three months' duration, cost the lives of over 200,000 men, and involved the world in the most stupendous military evolutions that history had yet ever seen. Besides, with Moscow in his grasp and Russia pierced to the core, to Napoleon there was no reason why this war should not have terminated with the most brilliant results, and from the standpoint of what he had experienced in all his former campaigns, this supposition on his part was, after all, sufficiently justifiable, and until almost the last moment there was no reason, as far as he could see at all events, why the issue of this war should differ from those of all his previous ones.

In nearly all his previous wars Napoleon had found that the occupation of the capital meant the ultimate subjugation of the country which he had invaded. Such had been the case in his Eastern expedition. After the capture of Cairo, Egypt was at his feet. His entry into Vienna in 1805 was followed by the treaty of Presburg, his second occupation of that metropolis in 1809 by the peace of Vienna, although the two mighty victories which closed both wars with Austria, Austerlitz and Wagram, were not fought until after the surrender of Vienna. His triumphant entry into Berlin in 1806 set the seal to the complete overthrow of Prussia, which he had effected at Jena. The capture of Warsaw, followed by the bloody campaign at Eylau, culminated nearly

seven months later in the peace of Tilsit, which nevertheless cost him the hard-fought victory of Friedland. With the surrender of Madrid in 1808 the conquest of Spain was, at least to his mind, practically achieved, and would undoubtedly have been completely so but for the interruption caused by the war with Austria that terminated with his mighty triumph at Wagram.

If this train of unintermitted success is taken into account, is it so very surprising if, even after the destruction of Moscow and up to nearly the last moment, he looked with confidence to a happy termination to this arduous war? and doubtless were it not for the unexpected concurrence of events sufficiently inauspicious for Napoleon (the treaties of Abo and Bucharest, by which the Czar was enabled to detach powerful reinforcements from Finland and Moldavia, and considerably augment his armies in Livonia and Volhynia) and the immense distance that separated him from the resources of his empire and of his vassal states, and the impossibility of keeping unbroken his line of communication through the desolate plains of Western Russia (which was the chief cause of the privations which the French army endured while in Moscow), the same fate that befell Austria and Prussia would undoubtedly have been meted out to the empire of the Romanoffs, and the whole course of modern history would have been irrevocably changed.

After all Napoleon's position in Moscow, during the first two or three weeks of his sojourn there, was at all events hardly more critical than that which he held after Eylau, where he was barely saved from defeat. and although he remained in possession of the field of battle,

yet so terrible was the shock he experienced in that bloody encounter that instead of attempting an advance on Königsberg, the goal for which he had struck, he was compelled to remain in a state of inaction, and even went so far as to propose terms of peace to Russia and Prussia, which, however, were peremptorily rejected, with the result that he was constrained to fall back upon the line of the Passarge, the country which he thus evacuated being shortly afterwards occupied by the enemy, Bennigsen, the Russian commander, claiming, and perhaps with some reason, the victory in a proclamation which he issued to his troops. Had Austria taken advantage of Napoleon's critical position, doubtless his fall might have been anticipated by seven years, but, still bleeding from the terrible mauling she sustained at Austerlitz, she remained quiescent. As it was, however, Napoleon's position was none too secure, and he found himself obliged to remain, during nearly four months, if not actually on the defensive, at least in a state of inaction in his winter quarters on the Passarge. True, although checked for the nonce, he still overawed the continent, and the vast reinforcements which he drew from France, Germany and Poland enabled him to emerge victorious from this bloody war in the following summer on the field of Friedland. Still, it is more than probable that had his line of communication in the campaign of 1807 been commensurable with the immense distance which in 1812 separated him from the Rhine that the issue of the war of 1807 might have been very different to the astounding results engendered by the Treaty of Tilsit. Bound by no treaty of alliance with Napoleon, as was the case in 1812, Austria would doubtless have risen in his rear and intercepted his retreat to the Rhine.

Thus it is obvious that, except for the immense line of communication, Napoleon's position in Moscow, up to the end of September at all events, was in reality but little more insecure than the one he was forced to assume after the shock of Eylau. In 1812 both Russia and Austria were his allies, although but dubious ones at the best, which, however, was not the case in 1807, and fifty thousand Prussians and Austrians were ranged under his standard side by side with his own legions in the plains of Livonia and on the Styr. Moreover, in the campaigns of 1807 he had been all but defeated, his advance arrested, and he had been foiled in his object, i.e., the capture of Königsberg, whereas in that of 1812 he had never once met with a check throughout the whole of his advance from the Niemen to Moscow, and even the slaughter of Borodino failed to stem the triumphant progress of his victorious banners to the towers of the Kremlin. (This much, however, is certain; Napoleon's eventual complete overthrow was due to his protracted sojourn in Moscow, as at the utmost his halt in that city should not have exceeded a fortnight, and thus in a measure have atoned for the precious time he lost on his march from the Niemen, instead of which he forfeited his all—his crown, his conquests, his very liberty, by lingering five weeks within the charred walls of Russia's ancient capital.)

CHAPTER V.

Napoleon abandons Moscow—Horrors of the Russian retreat—Napoleon leaves his army—His interview with de Pradt at Warsaw—Reflections.

As has already been stated, Napoleon, on his return to the Kremlin, on the 20th of September, had opened negotiations with the Russian generals, Bennigsen and Kutusoff, and the cordial reception which they accorded to Murat and Lauriston tended to blind him as to the final issue of the campaign. During nearly the whole of his residence in Moscow a sort of truce had subsisted between the two hostile armies, and with the exception of the depredatory incursions of the Cossacks and the irregular troops on the flanks and rear of the Grand Army, all active military operations had been suspended. This cessation of hostilities, however, proved the ruin of Napoleon and the salvation of Russia, for during this time, upon which the destiny of the world depended, the French army, encamped under the towers of the Kremlin, cut off from all its magazines, supports and resources in France and Central Europe, was paving the way to its approaching dissolution amidst the snows of the impending winter, whereas the main Russian host, posted at Taroutino, amply provided and thoroughly recuperated, and hourly reinforced by enthusiastic recruits from the southern provinces of the empire, was acquiring the efficiency requisite for an immediate resumption of vigorous offensive operations. The truth was that Napoleon, astute as he was, had been completely gulled by that wily old chief, Kutusoff,

who, with that dissimulation which is such a salient feature of the Muscovite character, had agreed to an armistice with the enemy with the sole object of gaining time until the rude northern winter had fairly set in, which, as he foresaw only too well, would prove, when conjoined with the Russian arms, a potent subsidiary in effecting the destruction of the French army and the ultimate deliverance of Russia.

At length a heavy fall of snow, which occurred on the 13th of October (a sufficiently palpable reminder of the approaching winter), warned Napoleon that a further continuance in Moscow would be fraught with disastrous consequences, and he accordingly made preparations for an immediate retreat, this resolution to abandon his unlucky conquest being strengthened by the ominous tidings which he received on the 18th of the same month. On that day Benningsen, who at the head of a considerable force had advanced from Taroutino with orders from Kutusoff to commence offensive operations, had attacked, early in the morning, the French advanced guard under Murat and Poniatowski posted at Winkowo, and after a stubborn encounter he succeeded in driving Murat with heavy loss from the field of battle. In this bloody contest the French lost fifteen hundred men who fell prisoners in the hands of the enemy, thirty-eight pieces of artillery, forty caissons, and the whole of their baggage. The roar of the cannonade was heard by Napoleon at Moscow, and the news of this serious reverse, which reached him as he was reviewing a body of his troops in the Kremlin, electrified him into action and roused all the fire of his genius. Before nightfall his whole army was in motion, and as he left the Kremlin before daybreak, on the 19th of October, he ex-

claimed: "Let us march on Kalouga, and woe to those who interrupt our passage."

Napoleon entered Moscow with ninety thousand effective men and twenty thousand sick and wounded; he left that fated city at the head of one hundred and three thousand combatants, six hundred guns, and two thousand artillery waggons and military chariots, but abandoned in Moscow twelve hundred sick to the mercy of the enemy. In spite of the terrible sufferings and privations which the French army endured among the inhospitable ruins of Moscow, nevertheless, during its long term of five weeks of inaction in that city, and owing to the beneficial rest which it enjoyed in consequence, the infantry had been increased by fully ten thousand men through the recovery of that number of valetudinarians from the ranks of the sick and wounded. If on the whole the infantry had suffered but little during Napoleon's sojourn in the Kremlin, such, however, had not been the case with regard to the cavalry, as owing to the scarcity of fodder and provender this important branch of the army had suffered severely during its stay in Moscow, and so terrible had been the mortality among the horses during that time that numerous corps of dismounted cavalry men were to be seen marching with the infantry, and such was the paucity of horses and so exhausted were those that had been preserved to the army that the utmost difficulty was experienced in moving the long trains of artillery, the efforts which this work involved being beyond the endurance of those noble beasts.

In this manner did the Grand Army evacuate Moscow and the fatal retreat commence. Those redoubtable warriors who erstwhile had carried the French standards in triumph into nearly every capital of Europe were fol-

lowed by a vast multitude of both sexes of all nations, numbering nearly forty thousand souls. In this tumultuous human torrent vehicles of every description were to be seen; elegant carriages, britzskas, waggons and carts laden with booty and provisions, many containing French and Russian women, and even children followed in the wake of the retreating army, whose leader now, for tne first time during thirteen years of conquests, found himself compelled to retire before the enemy. Russian peasants of both sexes and all ages were to be seen struggling under the weight of the spoils rescued from the conflagration of Moscow. The great cross of Ivan, Russian, Turkish, and Persian standards were seen borne as trophies of war by the French soldiery. Aged men with hoary beards pushing or dragging barrows and hand-carts loaded with their personal effects endeavoured to keep up with the vast throng of despairing fugitives. In truth this moving multitude resembled more a horde of Tartars or some barbarous nation returning with the rich plunder of a successful inroad than a disciplined army that had subjugated well-nigh the entire civilised world.

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It is not our purpose to dwell upon the horrors of the retreat of the Grand Army through the snow-bound plains of Western Russia, or upon the appalling catastrophe of the passage of the Beresina, which have already been sufficiently dilated upon by a legion of historians. Suffice it to say tnat after nearly seven weeks of unparalleled disasters never once intermitted Napoleon reached Smorgoni, a small hamlet in Lithuania, on the 5th of December, where he decided to leave the remnants of his shattered legions. Here he destroyed all

his letters and despatches in order they should not fall into the hands of the enemy, as had they been taken they might have proved of use to the Russians. Napoleon cannot be accused of disloyalty in thus separating himself from his gallant soldiers, this decision of his being due to the news of Malet's conspiracy, an account of which he received between Dorogobouge and Smolensko, and which induced him to hasten with the utmost dispatch to the French capital. Indeed, his departure was eagerly desired by his soldiers, as they were persuaded that his efforts in Paris would be of greater service to them than his presence at the head of his attenuated columns.

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Thus terminated this disastrous war—the greatest military catastrophe the modern world has ever known. Out of an army which, when it crossed the Niemen in the summer of 1812 for the overthrow of Russia, numbered close upon 600,000 combatants scarcely 80,000 men, inclusive of the Austrian and Prussian auxiliaries, dispirited and emaciated, regained their native soil, and of these not 10,000 were French.

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At midnight on December 5th, 1812, a small travelling carriage or Britzska, placed on runners and followed by a single sledge, left the little hamlet of Smorgoni in Lithuania, travelling in a south-westerly direction over the vast, desolate, snow-covered plains of Eastern Poland, towards Warsaw. Its occupants were four muffled forms, Napoleon, Caulincourt, Captain Wasowitz, of the Polish Lancers, and Rustan, the Mameluke, Napoleon's devoted factotum. In the sledge that followed were Duroc and General Mouton

(Count Lobau); a few Neapolitan horsemen only formed the escort of this small equipage.

That very day, at Smorgoni, Napoleon had bade adieu to the remnants of his once superb and apparently invincible army, and now, after the horrors of the most appalling military disaster recorded in history, he was hastening back incognito to France (under the pseudonym of Duke of Vicenza, Caulincourt's title) there to gird himself for the terrific struggle of 1813-14, the war of German liberation—of Europe's liberation, waged against the coalesced armies of the civilised world, engendered by the conflagration of Moscow.

Less than six months had elapsed since Napoleon crossed the Niemen into Russia in the full flush of confidence, and since then, within this brief space of time, what a change had come over his fortune! His "star" that but so recently at Dresden, when at its very zenith, in full splendour, had illumined his life's firmament, was now fast setting with ominous flash to its Nadir, and fate with ruthless hand had hurled him headlong down from the dizzy summit of well-nigh universal dominion.

In the early morning of December the 10th Napoleon reached Warsaw and alighted at an obscure inn, dignified by the name of Hôtel d' Angleterre, where he was met by the Abbé De Pradt, his ambassador at Warsaw, His interview with De Pradt in this humble tavern exemplifies his optimism and self-assurance generated by the bewildering results of thirty victories, and the enslavement of a continent.

De Pradt, accompanied by Caulincourt, found Napoleon in a small, dimly-lit apartment pacing before a newly-lighted fire wrapt in a heavy fur coat. Napoleon greeted his ambassador with an air of levity which

seemed hardly pertinent with the gravity of his situation. When he declared to De Pradt that the Grand Army was still " in a superb condition " it was less from a sense to prevaricate the truth than from a desire to make his auditor believe a statement which his inordinate pride, a pride intensified by his astonishing successes, would fain have made him believe and convert into a reality, but when he said with assured confidence, " I shall beat them (alluding to the Russians) in a battle or two on the Oder, and be again on the Niemen in six months," there is no doubt he was fully convinced that the summer of 1813 would find him not merely victorious over Russia, but once more dictating to Europe as erstwhile he had done at the windmill at Sarutchitz in 1805, on the raft at Tilsit in 1807, at Erfurt in 1808, from the precincts of Schoenbrunn in 1809, and from the blaze of the pageant of Dresden only seven months before, and indeed that Europe was spared from falling under his yoke a second time was due solely to the combination of the most stupendous events the world has perhaps ever known in conspiracy for his overthrow, culminating in the rout of Leipzig, under the weight of which even his unrivalled genius in the end had to succumb, and which found its objective in Fontainebleau, the rock of Elba, and the agonies of Saint Helena; and yet it would hardly have been matter for surprise had he triumphed over the coalition of 1813, considering the all but incredible exploits of his marvellous career, and that he was defeated at Leipzig seems perhaps more extraordinary than had he been victorious on that momentous day.

PHASE II.

LEIPZIG: FONTAINEBLEAU.

"I will die under the ruins of my throne before I will consent to strip France of all her possessions, and dishonour myself in the eyes of the world."

Napoleon.

"Better for me to die battling than that I should live defeated."

Padhâna-Sutta.
"The Imitation of Buddha."

CHAPTER I.

Napoleon's return to France—Conspiracy of Malet—Napoleon's military preparations for the Saxon Campaign—He defeats the Allies at Lützen—He enters Dresden—Reflections—He is victorious at Bautzen—Armistice of Pleswitz—Equivocal attitude of the Allies—Interview between Napoleon and Metternich—Congress of Prague—Negotiations between Napoleon and the Allies—Military dispositions of Napoleon on the Elbe—Rupture of negotiations—The Congress of Prague dissolved—Austria joins the coalition against Napoleon.

With incredible celerity Napoleon traversed Poland and Germany, and was back in Paris on the 18th of December, having covered 1,100 miles in less than a fortnight from the time he left his army at Smorgoni, the greater part of the journey being accomplished by sleigh.

On the 10th of December, as we have already seen, Napoleon was at Warsaw, where he only remained a few hours. Four days later, on the 14th, he reached Dresden, where he had a secret interview with the King of Saxony, Frederick Augustus, at an inn where he had found lodgment, and where that faithful ally of his renewed his assurance of fidelity. Here he wrote a letter to the Emperor of Austria, in which he urged him to augment his auxiliary force to sixty thousand men. At Erfurt he dispensed with his sledge, and a few days later, on the 18th, at eleven at night, he reached the Tuileries.

Never before in history was the irony of fate more

poignant than during this journey of Napoleon back to France through the heart of Europe. We see him now, if not actually a fugitive, at least fleeing discomfited from virtually his first and unquestionably the world's greatest military disaster, and revisiting those scenes where whileom he had dazzled the world by the exuberance of his power. At Dresden, only seven months before, he had stood forth as the Suzerain Lord of Europe —the King of Kings, and at Erfurt, in 1808, as the pivot of the world's political system! And now he was passing through these cities like a phantom unnoticed by the world that once had been suppliant at his feet.

The conspiracy of Malet had affected Napoleon infinitely more than did the indescribable disasters of the retreat from Moscow, and was in reality the chief motive which induced him to abandon his army at Smorgoni. This conspiracy, abortive though it was, revealed to Napoleon on what a flimsy foundation his power rested, and how uncertain were the ties that united his subjects, at least a part of them, to his throne and his dynasty.

The following is a short account of Malet's conspiracy, which, had it succeeded, would have altered the whole course of modern history, and Napoleon's destiny as well.

Malet, an officer who had served in the French army at the beginning of the Revolution, and who had been detained in custody since 1807 owing to some illegal transactions at Civita Vecchia, conceived the idea of overthrowing the Imperial Government. He forged some decrees (Senatus Consults), by means of which he hoped to shape a new government by announcing the death of Napoleon. On the 23rd of October, 1812, at three o'clock in the morning, he donned his uniform and repaired to the prison of La Force; he there demanded

the liberation of General Lahorie, who was detained a prisoner, and said to him: "The Senate returns you your sword, and appoints you Minister of Police." He then conducted him to the ministry and installed him. He announced to the minister of police, the Duke of Rovigo (Savary) that he was dismissed by order of the Senate, and lodged him in prison. He afterwards went to the Prefecture and ordered the preparation of premises for the installation of the Provisional Government. The colonel of a legion then arrived before the hotel of the Prefecture with twelve hundred men and received the orders of Malet, who on the spot dismissed Pasquier, the prefect of police. Malet then repaired to General Hullin, the Governor of Paris, but finding him disinclined to obey him, he shot him with a pistol in the face, wounding him severely. After this outrage he hurried to Doucet, the adjutant general, and announced his dismissal in the name of the Senate. Doucet, detecting some hesitation and embarrassment in Malet, sprang upon him and arrested him. A military commission condemned Malet to death with fourteen officers, who, however, were not implicated in the conspiracy, but who had merely obeyed him. Malet said to his judges: "I have not succeeded, I must die; otherwise a statue would be erected to my memory, as has been done to Bonaparte after Brumaire. I foretell that you will not cry 'Long live Napoleon' much longer. That man is the ruin of France." Such was the conspiracy of Malet; had it not miscarried history would not have to record the rout of Leipzig, the captivity of Elba, the overthrow of Waterloo—the ineffable tragedy and horrors of Saint Helena.

The first concern of Napoleon on his return to France from Russia was to repair the losses which his army sus-

tained in its disastrous retreat from Moscow by the levying of a new conscription. Never perhaps was the patriotic spirit of the French nation more manifest than on this occasion. As if by magic 350,000 conscripts enrolled themselves under the Imperial banners ready to stand to the last in defence of the Empire. This accretion to Napoleon's armies, this spontaneous rush to his standards, this ready response to his call is all the more extraordinary as the disasters of the Russian campaign, combined with the incessant war in Spain, had sapped the vitality of France and likewise depleted her of her male population. So terrible was the dearth of officers in the army that hundreds of youths, mere striplings of eighteen and nineteen, drawn for the most part from the lyceums or higher schools, were drafted into the army as sub-lieutenants, and were seen holding the rank of colonel before the age of twenty-five.

Immediately after the disasters of the retreat from Moscow Prussia openly declared war against France and united her armies to those of Russia. On the 15th of March, 1813, Alexander and Frederick William met at Breslau, where a reconciliation took place between the two monarchs. As Frederick William, with tears in his eyes, fell into the arms of Alexander, the latter exclaimed: "Wipe them; they are the last that Napoleon shall ever cause you to shed." On the 13th of the same month the treaty of Orebro had been concluded, by which Sweden ranged herself on the side of Russia and undertook to land an auxiliary corps of thirty-five thousand men in the north of Germany under Bernadotte to co-operate with the armies of the Czar. Thus, independently of the British under Wellington, who was preparing to march into Spain from Portugal, Napoleon found himself confronted in the north of Europe by

Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, whose united armies were taking the field against him. He, however, calmly prepared to meet, single-handed, the onset of this formidable coalition.

Undoubtedly had Napoleon been opposed by Russia and Prussia only, there would have been no question as to the issue of this war; it is even probable that but for the defection of the Würtembergian and Saxon contingents at the battle of Leipzig he would have been victorious, in spite of his numerical inferiority to the Allies, on that memorable day. The defection of his German allies obliged him so often to change his plan of campaign that his ruin became in a way inevitable.

The army which Napoleon was prepared to oppose to Russia and Prussia, not to mention Sweden, consisted, at the beginning of 1813, of 250,000 men, of which about 48,000 belonged to the contingents of Saxony, Würtemberg, Bavaria, Baden, Westphalia and Hesse, troops who were naturally ill-disposed towards France, and who caused more harm than good in the interests of Napoleon, their benefactor. The French were in possession of six bridges on the Elbe: one at Dresden, one at Meissen, one at Torgau, one at Wittemberg, one at Magdeburg, and one at Hamburg.

On the 15th of April, 1813, Napoleon left Paris to open the campaign against banded Europe, and on the 16th, at midnight, he arrived at Mayance, where he remained eight days preparing for the Titanic struggle to be waged in the valley of the Elbe. He left Mayance on the 24th, and arrived at Erfurt on the succeeding day.

On the 2nd of May Napoleon reached the classic plain of Lützen, where he won a glorious but hard-contested victory over the armies of Russia and Prussia,

and which was all the more creditable to the French arms owing to the vast preponderance of the Allies in cavalry, which precluded Napoleon from converting the victory into an overwhelming triumph. The French army, composed chiefly of raw conscripts, marched unflinchingly against the season veterans of Russia and Prussia. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia were present at the battle at the head of their celebrated guards, whom the Young Guard utterly overthrew. "During twenty years in which I have commanded the armies of France," said Napoleon, "I have never beheld more bravery and devotion. My youthful soldiers! honour and courage permeate from all their pores!" The battle of Lützen, however, was in a sense a barren victory, as neither prisoners, artillery, nor standards fell into the hands of the victors, and the Allies retired with unbroken ranks and in admirable order from the field towards Dresden.

Lützen, although nearly a Pyrrhic victory, nevertheless opened the gates of Dresden to Napoleon, which city he entered on the 8th of May, being joined there on the 12th by his vassal and faithful ally, Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony.

It is interesting to reflect upon Napoleon's occupation of Dresden in 1813. If Moscow was the last capital in new realms of conquests where his banners were to wave in triumph, then Dresden was the very last one he was destined ever to enter as a conqueror beyond the bounds of France. The difference between Napoleon's occupation of Dresden in 1813 and his entry, in his previous campaigns, into the capitals of those states and empires he had overthrown is that whereas he was now in possession of the capital of a friendly sovereign, of an ally who owed his crown to the munificence of the great con-

queror, in 1805, 1806, 1808, 1809, and 1812, when his eagles had been borne in triumph within the walls of Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, and again of Vienna, and Moscow, he was then in possession of the capitals of those states whose sovereigns had banded themselves for his overthrow, or whom he held in durance and whose armies he had shattered at Ulm and on the plains of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Burgos, Eckmühl, Wagram and Borodino.

Precisely a year before, in May 1812, Napoleon at Dresden, at the very zenith of his power, had overawed the Continent. This sojourn of Napoleon in the Saxon capital premonished the first stage of his undoing—the disastrous retreat from Moscow. His occupation of Dresden in May, 1813, was precursive of the second phase of his overthrow—the rout of Leipzig; and a peculiar coincidence, the retreat of the Grand Army from the towers of the Kremlin commenced on the 19th of October, 1812, and the third day of the greatest battle of modern times, the battle of Leipzig, or the battle of the nations (Napoleon's first complete defeat which he had sustained throughout his whole career of warfare), upon which he retired from that fatal field, was fought precisely a year later on the 19th of October, 1813. In truth it seemed as though Dresden wielded a baneful influence over the destiny of Napoleon.

During the respite which ensued from the time Napoleon entered Dresden to the resumption of hostilities, a lapse of about ten days, negotiations had been entered upon between Napoleon and the Austrian court, but as was only to be expected they were soon broken off owing to Napoleon's refusal to accede to the Austrian conditions, which stipulated the renunciation by Napoleon of all his conquests east of the Rhine and the

complete emancipation of Germany from the dominion of France. Napoleon, therefore, decided to crush the armies of Russia and Prussia ere Austria had united her legions to those of the confederacy.

The Allies were strongly posted at Bautzen on the Spree, about thirty miles east of Dresden, their inferiority to Napoleon in numbers being amply compensated by the strength of their position and their superiority in cavalry. On the morning of the 20th of May Napoleon attacked the allied army, and after a bloody contest he succeeded in driving the enemy beyond the Spree. Early the next morning the battle was renewed, and eventually victory crowned the standards of Napoleon, and the Allies abandoned the field and retreated into Silesia. Although Napoleon won a great victory at Bautzen, nevertheless its results were practically synonymous to those of Lützen, as no trophies graced his triumph and only fifteen hundred prisoners fell into his hands, and the Allies retired from the contest in admirable order. Nevertheless, in spite of its barren results and the death of Duroe, his faithful companion and trusted friend (perhaps the only person whom Napoleon really loved), who was killed by a cannon ball at the combat of Reichenbach on the day following the battle, the victory of Bautzen, or Wurtchen as it is sometimes called, revived the spirits of Napoleon and endued him with all his former confidence and self-assurance.

The battles of Lützen and Bautzen had redeemed the prestige of Napoleon and restored the magic of his name. The enthusiasm of his soldiers was revived. "It was the Russian winter," they said, "that vanquished the little corporal." Visions of the reinstatement of his supremacy over Europe passed before his mind, he

seemed animated by the intoxication of joy and imbued with a confidence that recalled the days of his overwhelming triumphs which was manifested by the French and Italian songs which he hummed as he rode with his advanced posts in pursuit of the allied army.

To testify his recognition of the gallantry and heroism displayed by his youthful conscripts at Lützen and Bautzen, Napoleon from the field of battle issued the following decree: "A monument shall be erected on the summit of Mont Cenis. On the front of this monument, which shall face Paris, shall be inscribed the names of all the cantons of the French departments on this side of the Alps. On the front, which shall face Milan, shall be written the names of all the cantons of the French departments beyond the Alps and of the kingdom of Italy. On the most conspicuous part of the monument the following inscription shall be written: 'The Emperor Napoleon from the field of Wurtchen has ordered the erection of this monument as a testimony of his gratitude towards his subjects of France and Italy, and to transmit to the most remote posterity the remembrance of that celebrated epoch when, in the space of three months, twelve hundred thousand men flew to arms to protect the integrity of the French empire and of her allies. Twenty-five million francs shall be consecrated to the erection of this monument.'"

The overthrow of Leipzig, the abdication of Fontainebleau, however, precluded this decree from being executed; but this was of small account. What monument soever magnificent or costly could add one tittle to or in any way tend to still further perpetuate through the ages the imperishable glory of the triumphs of Lützen and Bautzen?

In spite of the abortive results of the negotiations for

peace entered on between Napoleon and Austria during his sojourn in Dresden after the battle of Lützen, he, on the 18th of May, while setting out for the army, despatched a proposal to the allied sovereigns for an armistice, but they deemed it expedient to defer their reply until after the issue of the campaign. The battle of Bautzen, however, induced them to alter their tactics and accept Napoleon's overtures, and an armistice for six weeks was accordingly agreed to and signed at the village of Pleswitz on the 4th of June between the belligerent armies.

Napoleon, who had advanced to Breslau, now withdrew his forces from Silesia, and returned to Dresden. There is no doubt that by consenting to the armistice of Pleswitz he committed a fatal mistake, as this pause in the campaign enabled the Allies to recuperate their armies and gave Austria time in which to complete her armaments and the opportunity she was seeking to join her legions to those of Russia and Prussia. There is no doubt that Napoleon could have terminated the campaign in a few days. With his victorious army on the Oder, intercepting the Allies from their communications with Berlin and the north of Europe they would have been completely at his mercy and obliged to sign a humiliating peace, and his boast to the Abbé de Pradt at Warsaw that within six months his eagles would once more be triumphant on the Niemen might have been realised. Had Napoleon acted with the vigour that formerly had ensured his overwhelming triumphs, had he taken advantage of his position after his victory at Bautzen, instead of being duped by a specious truce, one of the darkest passages in modern history would never have been written, and mankind would have been

spared the harrowing narrative of the gruesome captivity of Saint Helena.

The armistice of Pleswitz was in truth only a farce and practically no progress was made in the negotiations towards a settlement of the difficulties between the belligerent powers. It is very much to be doubted if the Allies were inspired by a sincere desire for a peaceful termination to the negotiations, as it was obvious that their procrastinating policy was persevered in simply to gain time and to induce Austria to throw in her lot with that of the coalition, and the news of Wellington's victory at Vittoria only tended to encourage this dilatory spirit on the part of the Allies; and Austria, who, although she had assumed the rôle of mediator between the belligerents, was in reality in complete sympathy with Russia and Prussia, and in secret all but pledged to the interests of the coalition.

Napoleon, however, was not to be gulled by the equivocal attitude of Austria. The position which she had assumed as mediator between himself and Russia and Prussia, to say nothing of England and Sweden, was viewed by him with marked disfavour, and he regarded the attitude she had now taken in the negotiations as an act of open hostility, and this conviction, which future events fully justified him in entertaining, he scrupled not in openly declaring when he said to Metternich, in the outburst of indignation at the celebrated interview he had with that astute politician at the Marcolini Palace at Dresden on the 26th of June: "You cannot deny that since she has assumed the office of mediator, Austria has not only ceased to be my ally, but has become my enemy."

With regard to this interview it is interesting to reflect that nearly five years before, at Erfurt, during his inter-

view with the Emperor Alexander, when at the very height of his power, Napoleon's imperious and fiery spirit had been sufficiently evinced by a fit of choler at the Czar's refusal to coerce Austria, and that now at Dresden, fresh from the indelible horrors of the retreat from Moscow, standing, although unsuspected by himself, on the very brink of irremediable disaster, his resentment was again manifested by a second exhibition of temper provoked by the perfidious policy of that same power. The only result of this stormy and aimless interview, however, was the extension of the armistice of Pleswitz to August 10th, which was agreed to on the 30th of June, and by the express desire of Napoleon, it was stipulated that a congress should meet at Prague not later than the 5th of July to adjust the conditions upon which depended the peace of Europe, and which was not to be dissolved even in the event of the renewal of hostilities.

Indeed, the day after Napoleon's interview with Metternich, on June 27th, Austria, foreseeing that in spite of the armistice a renewal of hostilities would indubitably occur sooner or later, formally joined the Grand Alliance against Napoleon by affixing her signature to a secret treaty signed at Reichenbach. In this manner, therefore, did Austria (mainly through the influence of Metternich) invalidate the office of mediator which she had assumed by having recourse to a policy of guile and dissimulation.

The Congress of Prague was opened on July 12th, but as far as the preservation of the peace of Europe was concerned it might as well never have been convoked. The only purpose it did serve, however, was to give the Allies time in which to augment their armaments and to cement more firmly the adhesion of Austria to the coali-

tion. It is not very surprising, therefore, if Napoleon viewed the proceedings, or rather the diplomatic jugglery of the congress, with both distrust and contempt, and adopted towards that *august* assembly a policy of cavil and procrastination. It is even less surprising that the negotiations fell through considering the conditions upon which alone the Allies would condescend to treat with Napoleon.

These conditions (although perhaps not immoderate as far as the mere balance of power in Europe was concerned) stipulated the restitution of the Illyrian provinces to Austria and that she be given a share of Italy; the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and of the Kingdom of Italy; the restoration of Prussia; the cession of the city of Danzig to that Power; the re-establishment of the Hans Towns; and finally the renunciation by Napoleon of the 32nd military division of North Germany and of his supremacy over Switzerland as Grand Mediator of the Helvetic Republic. In short, these conditions stipulated for the renunciation by Napoleon of practically all his conquests, and in proposing them the Allies must have foreseen that Napoleon would never consent to such a wholesale dismemberment of his Empire, the welding together of which had entailed ten years of unintermitted conquests and the stupendous results of as many overwhelming triumphs. It would have been indeed surprising if Napoleon, at the head of 350,000 men, fresh from the glory and decked with the laurels of Lutzen and Bautzen, had conceded, without a murmur, to the peremptory demands of those Powers that erstwhile had been subjected to his fiat, and whose armies he had shattered in succession on twenty-seven fields.

Napoleon, however, was prepared to meet the Allies half way in their demands and to arrive at a compromise with them. He evinced a willingness to renounce some of his acquisitions, and for the maintenance of peace he declared he would forego his hold upon the Illyrian provinces, exclusive of Trieste, restore to Prussia her lost provinces and dissolve the Grand Duchy of Warsaw to cajole Russia, but more than this he emphatically refused to concede. These concessions which he was prepared to grant can scarcely be considered as paltry, and if it is borne in mind that he was still supreme in Central Europe and, moreover, assured of reasserting his dominion over the continent and that throughout his whole career of conquests he had never once yielded up as much as one square mile of territory, they were even magnanimous. The Allies must have known that these were the best terms they could expect from Napoleon, and by rejecting them they not only threw away the only opportunity that was ever offered them of arriving at an accommodation with him, but moreover demonstrated clearly that their professed desire to treat with Napoleon was but a ruse designed to mislead him, and that they were resolved to stake everything on the chances of war.

During the armistice Napoleon had not been idle. Never perhaps was his activity and organising genius more saliently displayed than during this period of his career. On the Elbe, Königstein, Dresden, Torgau, Wittemberg, Magdeburg and Hamburg had been strongly fortified, so that this great river in nearly its entire course, from the Bohemian mountains to its estuary in the North Sea, had been converted into a chain of formidable strongholds. But it was on Dresden that his efforts were mainly directed. Through his inde-

fatigable energy this city, which was destined to be the pivot upon which all his operations were to turn, had been strongly fortified by palisaded trenches, formidable batteries, and innumerable redoubts.

Napoleon's activity at this time passes belief. He not infrequently travelled seventeen or eighteen leagues in a single afternoon, either on horseback or in his carriage, inspecting the fortifications or reviewing the troops of the garrisons in the vicinity of Dresden. In the space of only a few days he visited Torgau, Wittemberg, Dresden, Magdeburg, Leipzig, Königstein, and Pirna, a circuit of fully 300 miles, diffusing, by the magic of his presence, new life and energy wherever he went. He was everywhere, and nothing escaped his observing mind and eagle eye.

On the 26th of July Napoleon set out from Dresden for Mayance, where he remained six days inspecting the fortifications then in progress in that city, and reviewing the large bodies of troops drafted from beyond the Rhine, whose march he directed with utmost dispatch upon the Saxon capital. There also he met his faithless consort, the Empress Marie Louise. This visit of Napoleon to Mayance proves how scanty were his hopes of a satisfactory issue to the negotiations of the Congress of Prague, and that he was fully prepared for every emergency in the event of a resumption of hostilities in the valley of the Elbe.

Whilst Napoleon was thus taking advantage of the pause in military operations in which to augment his army and strengthen his position at Dresden and on the line of the Elbe, the Allies had likewise profited by the suspension of hostilities. The Grand Army of the Allies, inclusive of the detachments advancing from Poland and Hungary, mustered fully 500,000 men with

nearly 1,500 cannon. Besides, Austria had received financial support from England, the British Cabinet having advanced at once £250,000 for the exigencies of the moment. Indeed, the Grand Alliance owed its existence, its raison d'être, so to speak, to the pecuniary assistance of England, whose subsidies in 1813 to the Continental Powers in arms against Napoleon, in money, clothing and stores amounted to £10,400,000 sterling, of which Germany alone received above £6,000,000. Thus were the vast financial resources of England employed in consolidating the Grand Alliance against Napoleon, and thus did English gold contribute materially towards effecting his overthrow on the plain of Leipzig.

In spite of Napoleon's readiness for war and of his confidence of ultimately triumphing over the coalition, he was not so intractable as not to desire a cessation of hostilities, for the nonce at any rate, by arriving at a compromise with the Allies on terms, however, prescribed by himself and commensurate with his glory, but under no other considerations would he treat for peace. We have seen on what terms only he was prepared to negotiate with the Allies. The dissolution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, the restoration to Prussia of her lost provinces, and the restitution to Austria of the Illyrian provinces, including Fiume, but exclusive of Trieste, being the utmost limits of the concessions which he could permit himself to grant. These conditions were, soon after Napoleon's return to Dresden from Mayance, tendered to the congress of Prague on the morning of the 11th of August, but after twelve o'clock of the preceding night, the time fixed for the expiration of the armistice and of the dissolution of the congress.

Austria, who, as mediator, had become the inter-

mediary or mouthpiece of the Allies, through the medium of Metternich, peremptorily rejected Napoleon's terms as being incompatible with the conditions prescribed by the congress of Prague for the assurance of universal peace and the guaranty of the liberty of European nations, and she intimated that as such they were repudiated by that assembly. Had the Allies, and more especially Austria, been inspired more by a sincere desire to arrive at an accommodation with Napoleon by some means or other than obsessed by a determination to emancipate Europe from his yoke, they would have accepted his terms and given them at least a trial, instead of which they raised captious and frivolous objections to his overtures, and made the belated proffer of his conditions to the congress of Prague a pretext to inundate Europe in a deluge of blood.

Austria now threw off the mask, and on the 11th of August signed an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Prussia and Russia. Early on the morning of that day innumerable beacons blazing on every peak of the Riesengebirge announced to the armies of Russia and Prussia in Silesia the news of the accession of Austria to the coalition and the renewal of hostilities. Thus was presaged from Bohemia's mountain passes to an expectant world the second phase in the sombre drama of Napoleon's downfall.

CHAPTER II.

Resumption of hostilities—Napoleon pursues Blücher into Silesia—Advance of the Grand Army of the Allies upon Dresden—Arrival of Napoleon at Dresden—Great victory of Napoleon at Dresden—Death of Moreau—Defeat at Vandamme—Battle of the Katzbach—Oudinot defeated at Gross-Beeren—Battle of Dennewitz—Napoleon pursues the Allies—Tactics of the Allies—Napoleon leaves Dresden—Defeat of Napoleon at Leipzig—Defeat of the Austro-Bavarian army by Napoleon at Hanau—Evacuation of Germany by the French—Reflections of Napoleon on the battle of Leipzig—Critical situation of Napoleon—Reflections.

The Allies were the first to resume offensive operations, in spite of the fact that an agreement had been decided upon that an interval of six days should elapse after the dissolution of the congress before a resumption of hostilities. Apprehensive that one of the first designs of the French would be to occupy Breslau, the Allies, on the 14th of August, took possession of that city, and Blücher in great strength attacked the French under Marshal Macdonald in Silesia, and on the 19th compelled them to retire beyond the Bober.

No sooner was Napoleon apprised of the resumption of hostilities than he established his headquarters at Gorlitz, and upon receiving the intelligence of the retreat of Macdonald he marched against Blücher, who instantly checked his advance and fell back before him, and such was Napoleon's activity and the enthusiasm with which his soldiers were animated by the magic of his presence, that by the 22nd the old Prussian had been pushed back beyond the Bober and the Katzbach, and was in full retreat upon Jauer.

The advance of Blücher into Silesia and his subse-

quent retreat before Napoleon was in reality the result of a plan preconceived by the Allies to mislead Napoleon as to the point where they proposed making their attack. While Napoleon, with the flower of his army, was being allured into the heart of Silesia by the wily old Prussian, the Grand Army of the Allies in Bohemia, under Schwartzenberg, was to advance upon Dresden and cut him off from that city and his communications with the Rhine, and, as will be seen, Napoleon, in spite of his intuitive genius, narrowly escaped falling into the snare so cunningly prepared for him by the Allies.

In accordance with this plan, the Grand Army of the Allies, 200,000 strong, crossed the Erzgebirge Mountains and on the 21st of August was in full march over the southern plains of Saxony upon Dresden, and on the morning of the 25th fully 120,000 men were encamped on the heights overlooking that city, and surrounded it practically on every side.

The news of the advance of the Grand Army of the Allies on Dresden reached Napoleon when he was still in pursuit of Blücher; he accordingly, on the receipt of this intelligence, halted at Lowenberg on the 22nd, and after entrusting the continuation of the pursuit of Blücher to Macdonald he, with the reserve cavalry and the guards, returned to Gorlitz; on the 24th he arrived at Bautzen, and on the following day his headquarters were at Stolpen.

Napoleon was undecided what course to adopt, whether to march on Pirna, and by this move cut off the enemy from his communications with Bohemia, or advance on Dresden, but the news which he received from Gourgaud of the peril to which Dresden was exposed induced him to march to the relief of that city; therefore at daybreak on the following morning, the

26th, he, with all his forces, moved rapidly upon the Saxon capital. Had Napoleon delayed his advance upon Dresden by even one hour that city would have been lost to him and in the hands of the enemy, for when he arrived within sight of that capital, he found it completely invested, except at one point, by the immense host of the Allies, and that he succeeded in effecting an entrance at all into Dresden was in truth short of miraculous, as he had practically to force his way through a veritable tornado of bombs and cannon balls. When the affrighted citizens beheld the familiar form of the Conqueror, the great three-cornered hat and drab coat, and shortly afterwards the tall, shaggy bear skins of the Old Guard and the shining helmets of the cuirassiers, they knew that the city was saved.

At ten o'clock Napoleon arrived at the Marcolini Palace, where he had an interview with his faithful ally, the King of Saxony. Not a minute too soon did Napoleon arrive in Dresden, for he found Frederick Augustus on the point of treating with the enemy with the view of surrendering his capital to the beleaguering army. The arrival of Napoleon, however, restored the confidence of his ally, and for the nonce dispelled all his apprehensions.

The French army in Dresden, augmented by the forces which accompanied Napoleon, now mustered 131,000, but the Allies had likewise been strongly reinforced, the Grand Army of the coalition having been swelled to 200,000 combatants. At four o'clock in the afternoon of the 26th the Allies made a furious attack on Dresden, which, however, was repulsed by Ney with the Guards and by the Young Guard, and the enemy was in consequence obliged to defer a further assault until the following day.

The battle was resumed on the morrow, the 27th, in spite of a dense fog and torrential rain. By well-directed attacks on either flanks of the hostile army, Napoleon not only frustrated every attack of the enemy, but obliged the Allies to retire in confusion before Dresden, which they accordingly did on the following day, with a loss of 39,000 in killed, wounded and prisoners, 26 pieces of cannon, and eighteen standards. The battle of Dresden was Napoleon's last great victory (as none of his victories over the Allies in his defence of France in 1814 were either great or decisive battles, and the battle of Ligny was to all purposes a Pyrrhic victory), and had a severe attack of indigestion not precluded him from conducting in person the pursuit of the enemy, its results might have been as decisive as those of Austerlitz, Jena, or Wagram.

This great battle is fraught with a tragic interest by the fate which befell General Moreau, the hero of Hohonlinden, who, on the second day of the battle, whilst on a round of inspection with the Emperor Alexander, had both legs fractured by a cannon ball fired from a French battery, which necessitated the amputation of both limbs, his death occurring five days later. This great general, by the express desire of the Czar, had but recently returned from America, where, since the Royalist plot of 1804, he had spent nine years of exile and had tendered his services in the interests of the Allies in arms against his old rival and his native land, and unquestionably the conception of the plan of campaign, the advance of the Grand Army of the Allies on Dresden in Napoleon's rear, while he was engaged with Blücher in Silesia, and which nearly proved fatal to him, was in a great measure ascribable to the military genius of the victor of Hohonlinden. Better for Moreau

had he ended his days in peaceful obscurity on his estate on the shores of the Bay of Delaware than have sacrificed his life and tarnished his glory whilst fighting in the ranks of his former enemies and the opponents of his compatriots.

The battle of Dresden was not merely Napoleon's last great victory, but, moreover, ushered in a train of irremediable disasters culminating in his complete overthrow. Thenceforth, wherever he did not command in person, ill-luck attended his arms. In the two days' battle of Kulm, fought on the 29th and 30th of August, General Vandamme sustained a crushing defeat near Töplitz. In this battle the French lost eighteen thousand men in killed and wounded and sixty pieces of cannon. On the 26th and 27th of the same month Macdonald was defeated by Blücher on the River Katzbach, losing eighteen thousand men in killed and prisoners and over 100 guns. On the 23rd Oudinot was repulsed with considerable loss by Bernadotte at Gross-Beeren, and finally, on the 7th of September, Ney suffered a severe defeat by the same general at Dennewitz, with a loss of 10,000 prisoners and forty-six guns. This succession of disasters had rendered Napoleon's great victory at Dresden abortive, and his position in that city untenable.

The news of these reverses, or rather of the three first, roused all the energy of Napoleon, who had been detained at Dresden through indisposition. He accordingly, with his health fully restored, set out against the enemy in person. On the 3rd of September he was in pursuit of Blücher, but failed to catch him up, as, in accordance with the plan agreed upon by the Allies, the Prussian commander hastily retired before him, thus avoiding a general engagement. On the 7th

he set out in pursuit of Wittgenstein, but with the same result as in the case of Blücher. On the 17th he advanced against the Allies, who likewise fell back before him into Bohemia. On the 21st he was again in chase of Blücher, who, as on the previous occasion, once more retired before him.

This plan of retiring before Napoleon when he advanced in person was in pursuance with the policy adhered to by the Allies to eschew from hazarding a pitched battle with Napoleon, and as soon as he had retired to assume the offensive against his lieutenants. By these tactics the Allies hoped to exhaust the indefatigable energy of their dreaded opponent and to decimate the French forces in detail. We are reminded of a goaded and tantalised bull in the arena in chase of his tormentors, the nimble banderilleros in full flight before the charge of the infuriated beast.

The successes of the Allies over Napoleon's marshals had annulled the advantages which he had gained by the battle of Dresden, and the only result of his great victory was a protraction by less than two months of the subversion of his dominion in Germany. The numerical superiority of the Allies and the initiative which the recent defeats sustained by Napoleon's lieutenants had enabled them to assume had obliged him to curtail the field of his operations around Dresden and reduced him to the defensive. In spite of the advance of the Allies west of the Elbe, and the peril he found himself in of being cut off from the Rhine, he clung to Dresden, as erstwhile he lingered against all prudence among the ruins of Moscow, until all hope was lost of maintaining himself in that city. Accordingly on the 7th of October, accompanied by the King of Saxony, he left Dresden, and on the 10th arrived at Düben, where he remained

till the 15th, and at noon on that day he reached the fatal field of Leipzig.

In spite of his perilous position, Napoleon's self-confidence, his faith in his "star," had not abated one iota. During his four days' halt at Düben, although nearly surrounded by the enemy and practically cut off from the Rhine, he entertained the mad idea of marching upon Berlin and transferring the war into Prussia, and but for the vigorous opposition of his marshals to this design, and the defection of Bavaria, he unquestionably would have ventured upon this enterprise.

Leipzig is situated in a vast plain watered by the Elster, the Pleisse, and the Parthe. It was there that was to be waged the three days' battle, the greatest of modern times, known as the "Battle of the Nations."

During the night of the 15th and 16th of October the French army beheld the heavens illumined by blazing rockets fired by the Allies—the signal which announced the union of all the coalesced armies and the great battle of the following day.

The French army consisted of 157,000 men, with six hundred pieces of cannon; the Allies numbered fully 300,000 combatants, with one thousand pieces of artillery. Nevertheless, in spite of the numerical inferiority of the French army to that of the enemy, Napoleon accepted battle. During the whole of the 16th the French gallantly resisted every effort of the Allies, and remained in possession of the field. The 17th passed without any fighting taking place, but on that day the Allies were reinforced by Bernadott's army, 50,000 strong. Ney, with very inferior forces, had now joined Napoleon. The French army, surrounded by over 300,000 men, fell back during the night to take up a stronger position near Leipzig. At the same time

Napoleon, preparing for a retreat, ordered some bridges to be thrown over the Elster, but this order was not executed by Berthier.

On the 18th the battle was resumed. The French were making desperate efforts to ensure the victory, when suddenly the Saxon and Würtembergian contingents, who occupied one of the most important positions of the line, marched over to the enemy with a battery of 19 guns, which they instantly turned upon the French. Napoleon filled up the gaps with the Regiments of the Guard, and fell upon the Saxons and drove them from their positions. The Allies fell back, leaving the French once more masters of the field.

Night had now arrived; Napoleon found it impossible, in the face of the tremendous odds against him, to renew the battle on the morrow without reserves. He therefore ordered his army to retreat and to cross the bridge over the Elster. All the night of the 18th was spent by the French army in this operation. On the morning of the 19th the engineers blew up the bridge over the Elster to protect the retreat; but two army corps were still in Leipzig engaged with the enemy. The soldiers, in endeavouring to escape, were either drowned in the Elster or made prisoners. Macdonald succeeded in escaping; Reynier and Lauriston fell into the hands of the enemy; Poniatowski, whilst endeavouring to cross the Elster on horseback, was carried by the current and perished in the swollen waters of the river. These three days of slaughter cost Napoleon 33,000 men and 260 pieces of cannon.

The following is Napoleon's explanation or apology for his defeat at Leipzig :—

" These two terrible days, which will be remembered in history as the days of the giants, cost the Allies one

hundred and fifty thousand men of their best troops, of which fifty thousand were killed on the field of battle. There was no comparison with the loss of the French, which did not amount to fifty thousand men. The immense difference between the numerical strength of the two armies had therefore been considerably reduced, and a third battle presented considerably more favourable chances for me; but the French army found itself depleted of its ammunition, its artillery could only offer sixteen thousand shots; two hundred and twenty thousand had been fired during the two days' battle. I was therefore of a necessity obliged to order a retreat."

The French army recrossed the Saale at Weissenfels, where it was to rally, when Napoleon, being informed that the Austro-Bavarian army had arrived on the Main by forced marches to bar his passage to France, resolved to march against it. On the 30th of October he came up with the allied army before Hanau, attacked it, and completely overthrew it, then continued his retreat beyond the Rhine, which the French recrossed on the 2nd of November.

The subjoining are the reflections of Napoleon on the results of the disastrous campaign of Leipzig, such as he dictated them :—

" This memorable campaign will be the triumph of the innate courage of French youth; of the intrigue and audacity of British diplomacy; of the spirit of the Russian nation; of the impudence of the Austrian Cabinet. It will be memorable for being the epoch of the disorganisation of political societies, of the alienation of the people from their sovereigns; and finally, of the tarnishing of the first military virtues, of fidelity, loyalty and honour. In spite of every comment, every false-

hood, every supposition, one will always arrive at this hideous conclusion; and time will reveal the truth and the consequences.

"Nevertheless, in the midst of so much infamy never was so much virtue to be found. In reality the infamies remained foreign to the kings, to the soldiers, and to the people; they were the work of some armed intriguers, of some political dare-devils, who, under some specious pretext of throwing off the foreign yoke, and to restore the national independence, have in fact only wittingly sold and delivered their masters to rival and covetous cabinets. The real results were not long in being revealed: the King of Saxony, the most honest man that ever held the sceptre, has been reft of half his dominions; the King of Denmark, so true to all his engagements, has been despoiled of one of his crowns, and the King of Bavaria has been forced to restitute some of his most precious prerogatives. What mattered it to the nations? They held their recompenses; the most upright hearts, the most innocent souls only met with chastisement, and, to overflow the cup of sorrow, it is a Frenchman, a man for whom French blood has procured a crown, a nursling of France, who has dealt the death blow to his native land!"

Napoleon no longer dissimulated from himself the immensity of the danger in which he was placed; he saw clearly that the decisive hour had arrived: he found himself placed between the coalesced armies of Europe, which menaced his empire, and the internal spirit of France, which seemed to associate itself with them. In France lassitude and dejection were being strongly felt. The great generals, for the most part, were sick of war, and conducted the military operations with languor and apathy. Tallyrand named this epoch "the beginning

of the end," and refused to treat for peace with the allied kings, stipulating for his services a condition which Napoleon did not feel justified in consenting to.

The battle of Leipzig elicits some interesting reflections. Precisely a year before, on the 19th of October, 1812, Napoleon left the ruined walls of Moscow and the terrible Russian retreat commenced—the first phase of his downfall. Little did he guess, when for the last time he gazed upon the towers of the Kremlin, that a year later, on the 19th of October, 1813, his power in Central Europe would be irretrievably shattered in the plains of Saxony and his erstwhile unconquered legions driven beyond the Rhine, where he was to make his last stand against the coalesced armies of Europe—the second stage in his stupendous overthrow. Not to human agency, but to the flames of Moscow, the snows of Russia, is to be imputed the first phase of his life's catastrophe; the second to the confederated battalions of banded Europe; to a coalition of empires; the most formidable league to be recorded throughout the annals of modern story—to the greatest defeat sustained by mortal since Darius' overthrow at Arbela.

CHAPTER III.

Invasion of France by the Allies—Numerical strength of the belligerent armies—The Notification of Frankfort—Condition of France—Campaign of France—Brilliant victories of Napoleon over the Allies—Congress of Chatillon—Eentry of the Allies into Paris—Abdication of Napoleon at Fontainebleau—Napoleon's departure for Elba—He arrives at Porto Ferragio—Reflections on the campaign of France.

The Allies invaded France on the 1st of January, 1814. The following is a table of the relative strength of the forces of France and of the coalition, inclusive of the Anglo-Spanish army in the South of France :—

FORCES OF FRANCE.

Grand Army—Napoleon	105,700
Army of Pyrenees and of Aragon—Soult, Suchet	90,000
Army of the South—Augereau	30,000
Garrisons in France	80,000
Franco-Italian Army on the Adige—Eugene Beauharnais	50,000
Army in Holland	70000
Army in Germany—Davoust	20,000
Garrisons in Germany	50,500
Grand Total	496,200

ARMY OF THE ALLIES.

Grand Army—Schwartzenberg	261,000
Army of Silesia—Blücher	137,000
Army of the North—Bernadotte	184,000
Dutch Corps	12,000

British forces in Belgium	8,000
Army of Reserve	235,000
Austrian Army in Italy—Bellegarde	80,000
Army of the Pyrenees—Wellington	140,000
Grand Total	1,057,000

Nevertheless, in spite of the vast disproportion in the numerical strength of the belligerent armies, the Allies, fearing a national awakening as in 1793, hesitated, at first, to cross the French frontier. They declared, by the Notification of Frankfort, that they were prepared to offer peace on condition that France restricted herself "within her natural boundaries, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees." Napoleon, however, was not disposed to accept these conditions; the negotiations were therefore broken off. Evidently the aim of the Allies was to deprive Napoleon of the succour of France; the allied sovereigns having decided, from the outset, not to treat with him.

We must here notice that the French army found itself deprived of those troops which occupied the garrisons in Germany and Prussia, and besides, there was a considerable number of soldiers scattered in various localities, whereas the Allies were able to dispose of all their masses, to which must be added the German Militia (Landwehrs), the Spanish irregular troops (Guerillas), and more than one hundred thousand Cossacks.

The French therefore had to contend against close upon one million and a half of men: and in spite of the indefatigable courage of the French soldiers, the bravery and talents of the French generals—in spite of the energy and genius of Napoleon, which at no other period

of his career was more transcendent, France was destined to succumb to the immense host of the invaders. Besides, there was no sincerity in this war; the French no longer knew on what to pin their faith. Napoleon's soldiers, however, did their duty, but the only aid they received was the sympathy of the French nation.

Every house in France was open to receive the wounded; on all the highways farmers' waggons, drawn by four horses, and loaded with whatever they could contain, passed one another. In truth the whole of France resembled a vast hospital.

Napoleon hoped that the French people would rise up en masse. This hope, however, was not realised. Why? Because there were no men capable of bearing arms. Even those who had paid as much as fifteen and twenty thousand francs to exempt themselves from further service in the active army, who had paid three and four thousand francs to redeem themselves from the National Guard, and subsequently fifteen hundred or two thousand francs to exempt themselves from service in the Departmental Guard, had been obliged to arm and equip themselves to form a corps of all the pecunious men who had evaded the levies, and which was named the Guard of Honour. Every male from sixteen to thirty-two years of age, celibates, married without children, or married and having but one child, had been called to the colours to serve in the great wars of Germany, Spain, and Russia. The Saxon campaign and that of Leipzig had been waged by beardless youths; it was imperative that the defence of France should be made by veterans and with the remnants of the Old and Young Guard. France could therefore no longer aid Napoleon. Those men who had remained civilians had too much to lose to expose themselves; if they died they

knew they would leave their families in the direst misery in a conquered land. All those fathers of families, moreover, were subjected to military service, twice or three times a week, as they formed part of the National Guard, each man in his district.

Far from blaming the French for having allowed the Allies to penetrate as far as their capital, it is astonishing that they held the enemy in check for so long. Indeed, it is impossible not to admire Napoleon's soldiers or the genius of their chief if we glance at the map of France, and if we note the different points where they successively advanced to engage the enemy in battle, in nearly all of which they won signal victories.

Napoleon opposed Maison to Bernadotte, Augereau to Bubna, Soult to Wellington, and he himself, with only sixty thousand men, resolved to arrest the vast armies of Blücher and Schwartzenberg. His plan was to manœuvre between the Seine and the Marne, and to prevent the junction of the two hostile armies.

Napoleon, leaving Macdonald at Chartres to protect the Marne, and Mortier at Troyes to guard the Seine, advanced against Blücher. The latter was defeated by Napoleon at Saint Dizier on the 27th of January, and again at Brienne on the 29th, but, in retiring after these two checks, he rejoined Schwartzenberg at Bar-sur-Aube. Napoleon attacked the enemy at La Rothiere on the 1st of February, and, after a terrible encounter, was obliged to retire upon Troyes and Nogent.

After their junction, Blücher and Schwartzenberg again divided their armies. Both generals marched upon Paris, the former by the valley of the Marne, the latter by the valley of the Seine. To Victor and Oudinot Napoleon consigned the task of holding Schwartzenberg in check, and he himself marched in

pursuit of Blücher, whose advanced guard had already reached Meaux. On the 10th of February he came up with him at Champaubert, and there cut his army in two. On the 11th he defeated General Sacken at Montmirail, and again, on the 12th at Chateau-Thierey; then again turning upon Blücher, he overthrew him at Vauchamps on the 14th and threw him upon Chalons; thus in five days, through his transcendent genius and the rapidity of his movements, Napoleon had gained four brilliant victories over the army of Silesia.

But during this time Victor and Oudinot had been obliged to fall back before the Austrians. Napoleon then left Marmont at Etoges to hold Blücher in check, and Mortier at Villers-Coterets to drive back the first columns of the Army of the North; then, after having marched thirty leagues in thirty-six hours, he advanced into the valley of the Seine, and there, on the 17th of February, pushed back the Austrians upon Montereau after the engagements of Guignes, Mormant, Nangis, and Valjouan.

The Würtembergians endeavoured to defend Montereau. From the castle of Surville Napoleon himself directed the fire of his artillery. The cannoniers of the Imperial Guard besought him not to expose himself: "Courage, my friends," he replied, "the bullet which is to kill me is not yet cast." The heights which bordered the right bank of the Seine were carried by Pajol and Gerard. The town of Montereau was taken; and on the following day, the 18th, Schwartzenberg was obliged to fall back upon Troyes.

The two armies of the Allies had effected a junction a second time near Arcis-sur-Aube, but, menaced by the army of Augereau, now increased to fifty thousand men, advancing from Lyons, Blücher and Schwartzenberg

once more divided their forces. The former wished to reach Paris by the valley of the Marne; the latter was to keep in check the army of Augereau in the valley of the Seine. Napoleon flew after Blücher and obliged him to recross the Marne, and pursued him towards Soissons, where he hoped to compel him to capitulate. Unfortunately for Napoleon, that town had opened her gates to the enemy. Blücher there found a refuge, and was able to retire behind the line of the Aisne.

Napoleon, however, was not discouraged by this fatal mishap, and continued his march upon Laon, with the design of cutting off the enemy from his communications with Belgium. He crossed the Aisne at Bery-au-Bac, and on the 7th of March overthrew the army of Blücher at Craonne and pursued him as far as Laon. There, with but the mere shadow of an army exhausted by fatigue, he fought a three days' battle, without, however, succeeding in dislodging the Prussians from their position. This reverse, however, was counterbalanced by his brilliant victory at Rheims on the 13th of March, and his capture of that city from St. Priest.

Meanwhile a congress had been opened at Chatillon to treat for peace. Napoleon, represented by Caulincourt, accepted the terms of the Declaration of Frankfort; but Tallyrand, secretly in league with the Allies, advised the Congress to raise new demands. The Allies exacted that France was to abandon Belgium, Savoy, and Nice. Napoleon, elated by his recent brilliant victories, emphatically refused to concede to these conditions. "The Bourbons," said he, "might accept the France of 1790; they never knew another; but I, who received from the Republic the Rhine and the Alps, I am asked to abandon the conquests made before my time; to leave France smaller than I found her! Never!"

The Congress of Chatillon, convoked on the 5th of February, was dissolved on the 19th of March. In view of this declaration of Napoleon, which was perfectly veracious, he was therefore fully justified in his resolve not to treat with the enemy, in prosecuting the war to the bitter end, and in rejecting the humiliating conditions imposed by the Allies.

The Allies, after the dissolution of the congress, renewed their alliance of Chaumont, and announced, by the Declaration of Vitry, their design of reinstating the Bourbons. In spite of his brilliant victories over the immense host of the Allies, Napoleon's position had now become extremely perilous. The Czar, wearied with the tediousness of the campaign, decided that the armies of Bohemia and Silesia should once more be reunited and conjointly march upon Paris. Their junction was to take place at Chalons. Schwartzenberg, during this movement of concentration, was checked by Napoleon at Arcis-sur-Aube, on the 22nd of March, but, after two days of severe fighting, he was unable to prevent the reunion of the Allied armies.

Blücher and Schwartzenberg now pursued the valley of the Marne and obliged Marmont and Mortier to fall back upon Paris, after the engagements of Fère-Champenoise, Sézanne, La Ferté-Gaucher, and Brie-Conte-Robert.

Nevertheless, Napoleon, in leaving the road to Paris open to the invaders, had conceived a new and daring plan worthy of his resourceful genius. This plan was to rouse up Lorraine and Alsace, occupy the defiles of the Voges, cut off the Allied army from its communications with Germany, and crush it under the walls of Paris: "I am nearer to Munich," said he, "than the

Allies are to Paris"; but the resistance of Paris was indispensable to the success of this plan.

The French Government, far from organising for a resistance or taking measures for the defence of Paris, gave instead the signal for the surrender of the capital. On the 29th of March the Empress Marie Louise, the King of Rome, and the Ministers of State, contrary to the advice of the majority of the Council of Regency, retired to Blois. Nothing was done to resist the enemy; Joseph Bonaparte, Clarke, the Minister for War, General Hullin, the Governor of Paris, took no serious steps for a defence. The heights of Chaumont, Montmartre, and Belleville were left depleted of all defences, and the co-operation of thirty thousand workmen, who offered to join the soldiers of Marmont and Mortier, was refused.

On the 30th of March the Allies, who extended in a semi-circle from the gates of Charenton to Clichy, attacked Paris. In the centre Barclay de Tolley directed the attack against the plateau of Romainville; on the right, Blücher assailed Montmartre and Clichy; on the left, the Prince of Würtemberg attacked the Barriere du Trône; Mortier fought heroically at la Vilette and at la Chapelle, Marmont on the plateau of Romainville, Moncy and the National Guard at the gates of Clichy, the students of the Polytechnical School at the Buttes Chaumont, the pupils of the School of Alfort on the bridge of Charenton. It was a heroic but hopeless struggle: "They are too numerous!" cried the French soldiers as they fell.

On the 30th of March, 1814, at five o'clock in the evening, Marmont, wishing to avoid the horrors of a city taken by assault, signed a capitulation, by which Paris was delivered up to the Allies. At that very moment

Napoleon, flushed with his second victory at St. Dizier, fought on the 26th of March, was only five hours' march from Paris. At Fromenteau, at ten o'clock at night, he heard of the capitulation of Marmont; in despair he retired to Fontainebleau.

On the 31st of March, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia made their entry into Paris. That very evening they enjoined the Senate to form a provisional government. On the 1st of April the Senate instituted a provisional government, presided over by Tallyrand, and composed of the Duke of Dalberg, of Count de Jaucourt, of the Abbé de Montesquiou, and General Bournonville. The dethronement of Napoleon was then proclaimed.

Nevertheless, Napoleon did not despair of retrieving his fortune, in spite of the reverses by which he was overwhelmed, for, besides the capitulation of Paris, Murat had just betrayed him and joined the Austrians: "Murat has turned against France, it is abominable!" cried Napoleon; "There he is, the Bernadotte of the South!" At the foot of the Pyrenees, Marshal Soult had fought the bloody and disastrous battle of Orthes, and had been defeated at Toulouse, and the British under Wellington had entered Toulouse, and Bordeaux had been occupied by the enemy.

Napoleon was too great a man to incite a partisan war; he therefore resigned himself to his fate. During the whole of the campaign of France he had proclaimed that he would never accept a France smaller than when he received her from the Republic. The French people declared they would have none of him; he therefore abdicated in favour of his son, but his son was likewise repudiated by the French nation, or rather ousted from his right of succession by the Allies. Napoleon sub-

mitted to the inevitable and contented himself with the sovereignty of the Island of Elba, which was conferred upon him by victorious Europe, upon whom he had so long trampled.

Here are the terms in which Napoleon dictated his abdication :—

" The Allied Powers having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon was the sole obstacle to the re-establishment of the peace of Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, true to his oath, declares that he renounces, for himself, and his heirs, the thrones of France and Italy, as there is no personal duty, even which depends upon life itself, which he is not prepared to execute in the interests of France." " Napoleon."

The solemn scene of Fontainebleau, which sealed the fall of the mightiest empire of modern times, accumulated upon Napoleon, and nearly in an instant, all the moral anguish by which it is possible for the human soul to be afflicted. Vanquished by defection, not by the force of arms (for it must be remembered that throughout the entire campaign of 1814 Napoleon in person never once sustained a clean defeat, for the battle of La Rothiere and the repulse of Laon can scarcely be called defeats in the literal sense of the word), he had to experience everything that conduced to exasperate a great soul and break a great heart. His so-called friends, his companions in arms, abandoned him, his attendants betrayed him; one surrendered his army and his capital, another his treasury; those whom he had befriended, loaded with wealth, were those who compassed his destruction; those who had been his most servile sycophants, those who had been most lavish in their adulation of him, were those who defamed nim.

NAPOLEON'S WRITING TABLE AND CHAIR, FONTAINEBLEAU.

That Senate which had been so prodigal of its flattery, that Senate which, on that very eve, had offered to order a levy of men to fight the foe, did not hesitate to become the vile instrument of those very foes; and, under the aegis of their bayonets it reproached him with their own handiwork. It broke the idol which it had created, and which it had so servilely and obsequiously worshipped. But the last blow was the most agonising for Napoleon; his wife (unworthy though she was of him) and his son, were torn from him in spite of all treaties and of all laws, and he saw them no more.

It was in the midst of so many misfortunes that Napoleon was presented with the treaty of Fontainebleau of the 11th of April, which had been drawn up in Paris by the Ministers of the Allied Powers. From the moment that his own person only was in question there was no treaty to ratify. Napoleon (although never personally defeated) yielded to the force of destiny: only he asked not to be treated as a prisoner of war, and for this a single agreement sufficed.

In vain was he besought to consider his situation, his existence, and his future needs: "And what does it matter to me?" he constantly replied. "A crown a day and a horse, that is all I require." With the greatest difficulty he was induced to ratify the treaty, and his consent was only obtained on the plea of momentuous political views.

The departure of Napoleon was delayed by the factions that feared to see him so near France. Every difficulty, however, was removed by the indefatigable zeal of Caulincourt.

On the morning of the 20th of April Napoleon appeared before his Guard, who had never ceased to accompany him in the days of his misfortune.

At first there ensued a long pause of emotion—a solemn silence which it is impossible to describe. For a long time the mighty Conqueror, the ex-Emperor and King, gazed upon that faithful guard, so beloved by him, that still surrounded him with a sort of religious respect, and who would still have marched to death for him. At last, in a voice agitated by the agony which filled his soul, he said :—

" Generals, officers, sergeants and soldiers of my Old Guard! I bid you farewell. During twenty years I have been satisfied with you. I have always found you on the road to glory.

" The Allied Powers have armed all Europe against me; a part of my army has betrayed its duties, and France herself has asked other destinies.

" With you and those brave men who have remained faithful to me I could have provoked a civil war that would have lasted three years; but France would have suffered, which was contrary to the aim I have proposed.

" Be faithful to the new king which France has chosen; do not abandon our beloved country, so long oppressed. Love her always—love her truly, that beloved country!

" Do not commiserate for my lot; I shall always be happy as long as I know that you are likewise happy.

" I could have died; nothing would have been easier; but I shall follow incessantly the road of honour. I have still to write what we have accomplished.

" I cannot embrace you all; but I shall embrace you, general.....come, general".....he clasped General Petit in his arms, " let the eagle be brought " .....he kissed it. " Beloved eagle! Let these kisses resound in the heart of all brave men!.....Farewell

my children!.....my wishes will always accompany you; preserve my memory."

Like an aged man who has just lost his last prop, each of these veterans remained immovable in the attitude of sorrow that no longer expects consolation. Most of them leant their rifles carelessly upon their left arm, and with the right hand made a gesture of farewell to their chief. There were no cries, no murmurs. When Napoleon had disappeared officers and soldiers gazed at one another in silence, tears moistened those beards bleached by so many suns, whitened by so many years of constant duty.

Napoleon left. At first he was well treated; but in Provence he was insulted and nearly mobbed by the populace. He narrowly escaped being massacred at Maubreuil; and at Orgon he was obliged to disguise himself to escape from the fury of the mob.

At last, on the 27th of April, Napoleon arrived at Fréjus, and on the following day embarked on a British frigate, the "Undaunted," which bore the mighty captive to his incarceration of Elba.

On the 5th of May, at six o'clock in the evening, Napoleon landed at Porto Ferragio, where he was received by General Dalesme: "General," said Napoleon, "I have sacrificed my rights for the interests of my country, and I have reserved to myself the proprietorship and sovereignty of the island of Elba; announce to the inhabitants the choice I have made of their island for my abode; tell them they will ever be the subject of my most lively interest."

Napoleon was presented with the keys of the city. He chose the Municipal Hotel for his residence, but later transferred his quarters to the Villa S. Martino, situated in the vicinity of Porto Ferrajo.

Bertrand, Drouot, Cambronne, and fifteen hundred soldiers remained with the dethroned conqueror, who was soon joined by his mother and his sister Pauline, Princess Borghese.

The Island of Elba now became an animated theatre. Through the indefatigable energy of Napoleon roads were constructed, quays and many houses built.

The flag of the Island of Elba was white and purple, strewn with bees, as formerly was the standard of the Franks.

The defence of France by Napoleon in 1814 is perhaps the most wonderful campaign history has ever known. For nearly two months the Conqueror, with but the shadow of an army, kept the coalesced battalions of united Europe at bay, and all but achieved the deliverance of France by his brilliant victories of Saint Dizier, Brienne, Champaubert, Montmirail, Chateau-Thierry, Vauchamps, Montereau, Craonne, Rheims, and Arcis-sur-Aube, and at one time it looked as though his "star" would rise above all obstacles, insurmountable as they really were, and the vast host of the Allied Powers pushed back beyond the Rhine.

At no other period of his extraordinary career did Napoleon's military genius shine with a brighter lustre, or was his activity greater, than during the campaign of 1814. In this great struggle for the defence of his throne—for his self-preservation, we may say, against a crusade of the greatest empires of Christendom, Napoleon surpassed himself; military genius in all its nakedness stood revealed before the world. The celerity of his movements, the resourcefulness of his genius, the inexhaustible, nay, the inexorable energy which he displayed in this Titanic struggle, recall the brilliant evolutions which have for ever immortalised the Italian cam-

paign of 1796-7, when in the plains of Piedmont and Lombardy he held the world spellbound by his innovations in the science of war. The mighty Conqueror, the subjugator of Europe, in the plains of Champagne, seemed to have shed his skin, seemed transfigured into the youthful, fiery hero of Montenotte, Lodi, Arcola, and Rivoli. In Napoleon's defence of France we are reminded of a bear attacked by a pack of yelping hounds, wounded it is true, but ever defiant and victorious over the gory and lacerated bodies of its puny victims. Still more wonderful than his victories over the overwhelming army of the Allies is his reappearance, as by magic, in France, less than a year after the greatest overthrow on record throughout the annals of human story.

PHASE III.

WATERLOO : ST. HELENA.

"I have worn the Imperial Crown of France; the Iron Crown of Italy; England has now given me a greater and more glorious than either of them—for it is that worn by the Saviour of the world—a crown of thorns. Oppression and every insult that is offered to me only adds to my glory, and it is to the persecutions of England I shall owe the brightest part of my fame. . . . . I bequeath the disgrace of my death to the reigning house of England."

"Napoleon."

"'Tis wrong to conquer him who sues for mercy."

Lalita Vistara.

"The Imitation of Buddha."

CHAPTER I.

Description of the Island of Elba—Designs of the Allies with regard to Napoleon—Interview between Napoleon and Fleury de Chaboulon —Napoleon's escape from Elba—He lands in France—Reflections on this event—Enthusiasm with which he is received in France—His triumphal march upon Paris—He enters Paris—Joy with which he is there received.

The Island of Elba, 18 miles by 6, is situated five miles from Piombino on the coast of Tuscany, and in Napoleon's time possessed seven ports or bays of disembarkment, from whence every day there arrived or departed a great number of vessels of all nationalities. More than four hundred vessels, from seven to fifty tons, belonging to the inhabitants of Elba, were employed in the transport of wine, ore, salt-meat and fish, or victuals for the consumption of the islanders. Moreover, hundreds of Neapolitan and Genoese feluccas engaged in fishing, and other craft, frequented the coasts of Elba. In short, there was hardly a month or a week in which a considerable number of Moorish, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Genoese, Tuscan or Neapolitan vessels did not anchor at Porto-Ferragio or Porto-Longo for shelter from the stress of weather.

Elba underwent a complete metamorphosis during Napoleon's nine months' sojourn in that island. Through his energy and activity vast improvements were carried out. The capital, Porto-Ferragio, became

MARBLE BUST OF NAPOLEON IN THE MUSEUM AT BOULOGNE.

animated with the shipping of Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Genoa, Tuscany, and Naples. The man who had found a continent too circumscribed for elbow room, seemed reconciled with his Liliputian realm. That vast intellect whose inexhaustible vigour had been, for over a decade, expanded over well-nigh the whole of Europe, was now as actively engaged in the administration of that island prison.

Considering the unbounded sway he had once exercised, Napoleon endured his incarceration at Elba with extraordinary resignation. To one of the many visitors to Elba during his sojourn there, who expressed surprise at the calmness with which he bore the change in his fortune, he replied: "It is that everybody has been, I think, more astonished than me; I have not a too good opinion of men, and I have always distrusted fortune. Besides, I have enjoyed but little happiness: my brothers were more kings than me; they have had the enjoyment of royalty; I have had little but its fatigues."

To defray the expenses which the upkeep of his pigmy army entailed, Napoleon had been obliged to raise the taxes of the Island of Elba, much to the discontent of the inhabitants. Although his revenue amounted to less than 500,000 francs, his outlay for the maintenance of his troops cost him 1,000,000 francs a year. False to his promise, Louis XVIII. had not paid one centime of the 2,500,000 francs which he had pledged himself to pay yearly to the fallen Emperor. Under these circumstances, coupled with the intelligence he received of the discontented state of France with the old regime, and of a rumour that the Allies contemplated transporting him to Saint Helena, can Napoleon be blamed for escaping from Elba? A prolongation of his residence on that island would not only have brought him face to

face with bankruptcy, but would have been fraught with imminent peril to himself, and in all probability have forestalled the everlasting shame of his captivity at Saint Helena.

Napoleon's escape from Elba is perhaps the most extraordinary and romantic episode in history, and to anyone but Napoleon would have been regarded as but a quixotic adventure. The discontent of the French people, and more especially of Napoleon's old veterans, if not of the entire French army, with the old regime, coupled with the intelligence conveyed to him through an interview which he had at Elba, on the 13th of February, 1815, with Fleury de Chaboulon, a former member of his Council of State, of a military plot to overthrow Louis XVIII., strengthened him in his resolve to return to France.

Chaboulon easily obtained an interview of Napoleon, to whom he revealed the situation of France, and even intimated that the leading statesmen in France intended to overthrow the Government. Then the somnolent genius of Napoleon was awakened. He paced his room with rapid strides, evidently in great agitation. Then, after an interval of silence, he asked: "I am then forgotten in France?" "No, sire," replied Chaboulon, "on the contrary, you are deeply regretted; France desires you back. . . ." "Very well! Go to Paris, visit my companions in arms, my generals, my marshals; go to Italy, visit my family. Here is a cipher to correspond with me," said Napoleon. Chaboulon left; but he reached Paris only after Napoleon's arrival in that capital.

For about two weeks after the departure of Chaboulon Napoleon appeared resigned and contented in his island prison. The idea that one day he would land on

the coast of France to wage war against the Bourbons was not entertained for an instant; such an event had not been foreseen by any of the Powers, thanks to the lampooners. There certainly was a British advice-boat, the "Partridge," which cruised between Genoa, Leghorn, Civitta-Vecchia and Elba, but with the exception of rendering sundry services to the French residents on that island it had no relative mission with Napoleon. This vessel was employed by Colonel Campbell (afterwards Sir Niel Campbell), the British Commissioner designated by Lord Castlereagh, on his private errands as well as in transmitting English travellers from Leghorn to Genoa, who desired to visit the Island of Elba.

Napoleon's interview with Chaboulon had made him resolved to quit Elba and return to France to reassert his dominion there. On the 26th of February, 1815, the Battalion of his Guard, the rest of his troops, and the officers of his household received the order to embark; everyone believed that Naples or some other point of Italy was to be their destination. At eight o'clock in the evening Napoleon embarked on the French brig the "Inconstant," and exclaimed, "The die is cast!" The officers, the soldiers of the flotilla, gazed in silence upon Napoleon; everyone evinced the greatest curiosity to know whither the little expedition was bound. At the end of an hour Napoleon broke silence: "Grenadiers," he said, "we are going to France, we are going to Paris." At these magic words all suspense was dispelled, every face beamed with joy, and cries of "Vive la France!" "Vive Napoleon!" resounded from the seven vessels which composed the flotilla.

At the very moment of Napoleon's departure from Elba the "Partridge" was at Leghorn; he had therefore nothing to fear as far as the British advice-boat was

concerned; but on the following day a French warship was descried bearing full sail upon the "Inconstant." It was the "Zephyr," commanded by Captain Andrieux. The commander of the "Inconstant" proposed boarding and capturing the "Zephyr," but Napoleon rejected this idea as absurd except in the last exigency. He ordered his grenadiers to conceal themselves between decks. The two warships were soon within hailing distance, and exchanged salutes. The commander of the "Zephyr," having recognised the "Inconstant," inquired after the Emperor, and Napoleon himself replied with a trumpet. "He is marvellously well." Captain Andrieux little suspected the inestimable prize which had thus given him the slip.

Before leaving Elba Napoleon had indited two proclamations, but owing to the illegibleness of his caligraphy no one could deciper them; he consigned them to the waves and dictated two others, one addressed to the army, the other to the French people. All those who could write were enjoined to make a copy of the proclamations; drums, benches, and caps were converted into writing desks, and everyone set gaily to work.

The generals, the officers, also drew up a proclamation to the army. It was scarcely finished when the coast of Antibes was descried. The sacred soil of France was saluted with enthusiasm.

Napoleon's return to France from Elba, and his miraculous reinstatement into power, is perhaps the most wonderful epoch in his career, and is without a precedent in the annals of history, and, moreover, is a clear attestation that instead of being the *tyrant*, the *oppressor* of humanity, as so many still delight in designating him, he was the hero, nay, the idol of the popular imagination. Had he been the selfish, blood-thirsty

despot, as he has so often been depicted by his traducers, would the gates of Grenoble, of Lyons and Châlons have been thrown open to him amid the reiterated cries of "Vive l'Empererur!" or would he have entered Paris and there, acclaimed by an exultant populace, have regained his crown without the effusion of a drop of blood or the firing of a single shot?

On the 1st of March the little flotilla that bore the great adventurer and his fortunes anchored in the Golfe de Jouan at Fréjus, near Antibes (where over sixteen years before he disembarked from his Egyptian expedition to control the destinies of France, and from whence the "Undaunted" bore him to his captivity of Elba), and at five o'clock Napoleon landed in an olive grove, and as he once more set foot upon French soil he exclaimed: "The Congress of Vienna is now dissolved."

It was not enough that Napoleon had been stigmatised by the allied nations as a usurper, but the Bourbons had the unheard-of audacity to promulgate an ordinance in which they branded him as "the miserable adventurer," denounced him as *an outlaw whom anyone might shoot*, and set a price upon his head. This they did against the man who, by the unanimous voice of the French people, had been raised to the imperial throne of France.

With the return of Napoleon to France one million men were arrayed by the banded nations of Europe to *liberate* France from the *tyranny* and *oppression* of the man who on his triumphant march from Fréjus to Paris had been greeted by the acclamation and the fervent love of the entire French nation.

It is astonishing, nay, incredible, and a crying shame, that liberty-loving England sullied her fame and tarnished her glory by joining hands with the coalition against Napoleon for the express purpose of reinstating the detested Bourbons, against the wishes of the French

people. Her implacable *hatred* of the great Corsican extinguished her better feelings of humanity and justice, and induced her to join the shameful compact. After Napoleon's overthrow, abdication and incarceration at Elba, the belligerency between England and France had ceased to be, and had no raison d' être. Napoleon's return to France was not instigated by promptings of hostile feelings against England or any other nation for that matter, but was incited simply by the desire to have restituted to him that sovereignty which France had bestowed upon him and which she was prepared once more to reinvest him with. In escaping from Elba Napoleon violated no treaty and committed no breach of international law; and doubtless had he received the allowance of 2,500,000 francs which Louis XVIII. had pledged himself to pay him yearly that page of history would have been a blank which now records the ephemeral reign of the Hundred Days and the rout of Waterloo.

The first undertaking of Napoleon upon landing was to despatch twenty-five grenadiers and an officer of the Guard to Antibes to ascertain the disposition of the garrison there and at the same time to gain it over to his side, but, carried away by their enthusiasm, the grenadiers entered Antibes with cries of " Vive l'Empereur !" The commander of the garrison ordered the draw-bridge to be raised and the grenadiers were made prisoners. Upon being apprised of this contretemps some of Napoleon's officers proposed marching upon Antibes and to capture the town by force in order to anticipate the ill-effects which its resistance might produce throughout France. Napoleon, however, pointed out that the capture of Antibes was in no way essential to the conquest of France, that every moment was inesti-

mably precious, that it was incumbent to push on and to repair the mishap of Antibes by a march that should outstrip the news of that reverse. Napoleon, as he advanced, had a kindly word for and conversed gaily with everyone whom he chanced to meet on his march among the rugged hills of Provence and Dauphiné.

On one occasion, while Napoleon was interrogating some peasants who had approached his bivouac, one of them, who had formerly served under the imperial banners, insisted upon following his old master and being enrolled in his battalion. Napoleon, turning to Bertrand, exclaimed, "Well, you see we have a reinforcement already."

On a subsequent occasion, during a great gathering of the inhabitants of the towns in the neighbourhood who were accompanied by their mayors and parish priests, one of the most touching spectacles that can be imagined was enacted in one of those sequestered valleys of Dauphiné. From the midst of the throng one of the finest grenadiers of Napoleon's Guard, who had been missing since the disembarkation at Fréjus, and upon whom suspicion had fallen, stepped forth, his eyes filled with tears of joy: supported in his arms was an aged man bent down by the weight of ninety summers. It was his father whom he had sought and whom he thus led in the midst of the multitude to grant him the joy of beholding Napoleon before he died. Had Napoleon been the blood-thirsty monster that his calumniators assert him to have been, would such a manifestation of love for his person have been evinced by the humble and the lowly? We think not.

By the first beams of the rising moon the bivouac was broken up, and Napoleon resumed his march upon Paris, at the head of five hundred men of his Guard, two

hundred Corsican horsemen, and one hundred Polish lancers. These last, unable to transport their horses from Elba, had nevertheless brought their saddles, and marched gaily bent under the weight of their heavy load.

To dwell upon Napoleon's advance upon Paris would only mean to enumerate the events of a triumphal march, characterised by the effluence of a nation's unalloyed and fervent love, as was demonstrated at Grasse, Grenoble, Lyons, Châlons, Auxerre, and in fact throughout his entire route, without mentioning Paris itself. On the 20th of March, at nine o'clock at night, less than three weeks after leaving Fréjus, Napoleon entered the French capital amid the wildest demonstration of enthusiasm, and found himself once more reinstated at the Tuileries and reinvested with all the prerogatives of sovereignty. He was greeted at the Tuileries by the vociferations of a mighty throng, and was literally carried up the great staircase of the palace into the saloon of reception, where he was received with delirious joy by a bevy of fair women, the ladies of the Imperial Court, who, in an atmosphere redolent with the fragrant perfume exhaled by an exuberance of bouquets of luxurious violets which they wore in their bosoms, half concealed by the richest laces, showered "fervent kisses on his cheeks, his hands, and even his dress." *

Had Napoleon so minded he could easily have ignited a partisan warfare and entered Paris at the head of an armed peasantry as the leader, nay, the King of an adoring proletariat. But this man, the chosen of the *people*, who stands forth as the apotheosis of a militant democracy, as the champion of the free will of man and as the subverter of the divine right of monarchial

* Alison.

despotism, willed otherwise: Why? because Napoleon, although the mightiest opponent of the hereditary tyranny of Kings that the world has ever known, in no wise sympathised with mobocracy or demagogism. Law and order, maintained by the power of the sword in the hands of him pronounced the most fitted to wield it, was the fundamental principle upon which his vigorous rule was based.

CHAPTER II.

The Hundred Days—Insurrection of the Duke of Angoulême—Magnanimity of Napoleon—Decree of the Congress of Vienna against him—Napoleon's letter to the sovereigns of Europe—Perfidy of the Allies towards Napoleon—They refuse to treat with him—Europe in arms against Napoleon—He reorganises the constitution of France—The Additional Act—State of the French Army during the Hundred Days—Decline in Napoleon's physical and mental activity—The Champ de Mai—The fascination of Napoleon's personality—The school-girls of Ecouen.

We have now reached that period of Napoleon's career known as the Hundred Days. During this brief reign of barely three months, for the last time he was to stand face to face before the world, and the curtain was to fall over the stage upon which he had played so wonderful, so conspicuous and transcendent a part, and he was to be seen no more.

The return of Napoleon to Paris was marked by two acts of extraordinary magnanimity on his part. He was barely within the walls of the Tuileries than he issued an order that enjoined that the entire family of the Bourbons should be ostracised from the soil of France, without, however, being subject to either molestation or insult. It was in Napoleon's power to have kept captive every member of the house of Bourbon, that house that had branded him as an outlaw and set a price upon his head. But Napoleon acted otherwise; he spurned to stoop to the methods of a bandit, and displayed a generosity and magnanimity towards the house of Bourbon which even the most biassed of his historians must acknowledge.

The Duke of Angoulême, who had been taken captive by General Grouchy in an abortive attempt to rouse up the southern provinces in favour of the Bourbons, was

immediately set at liberty by Napoleon and given every facility to depart in safety from France.

The following are the terms of the capitulation accorded by Napoleon to the Prince :—

1. The Royalist army is dissolved, the National Guards, by which it was constituted in part, shall return to their homes after having laid down their arms; the officers shall be permitted to retain their swords, the soldiers of the line shall return to those garrisons that shall be assigned to them beforehand. 2. The Duke of Angoulême shall betake himself to the port of Cette, where he shall embark for whatever destination he may have decided upon. 3. All officers and whoever else that may desire to follow him shall be allowed to embark with him. 4. The present convention shall remain privy until H.R.H. shall have left France. Ratified with the consent of the general commanding in chief at the headquarters of Pont-Saint-Esprit, the 8th of April, 1815.

Such a capitulation as this granted to an enemy caught red-handed in the act of raising the banner of insurrection against his rule was an extraordinary manifestation of nobility and generosity on Napoleon's part which has few parallels in history, and which was certainly not displayed by James I. with regard to the Duke of Monmouth or by the Bourbons, at the second restoration, in their treatment of the heroic Ney. And yet it was Napoleon whom the Bourbons had treated as a wild beast to be brought captive "in an iron cage," and who to this very day is cognominated by many a selfish, bloodthirsty despot—a monster in human form.

That Napoleon was imbued by the sincerest sentiments for peace, after his return from Elba, is attested by the letter he addressed to each of the sovereigns of

the coalesced Powers of Europe, wherein he professed himself animated by the most genuine sentiments of good-will towards all nations, and moreover, he endeavoured to conciliate the Allied Powers by a solemn declaration of his earnest desire to abide by the articles of the treaty of Paris of 1814, but Europe perversely refused to credit him with pacific intentions, and branded him as a pariah and excommunicated him, so to speak, from all social ties and the laws of humanity and civilisation.

On the intelligence of the escape of Napoleon from Elba the Congress of Vienna formally declared that "*he* (Napoleon) *has deprived himself of the protection of the laws*," and "*that he has thrown himself out of all the relations of civilised society*." In this barbarous and unheard of decree the world witnessed the unprecedented sight of a *single man* being denounced and damned by the united nations of Christendom.

In the following terms was couched Napoleon's noble appeal for a reconciliation and the preservation of universal peace to the coalesced sovereigns of Europe, a copy of which was despatched by courier to each of their respective courts :—

Sire, my brother, April 4th, 1815.

"You will have been informed, during the course of last month, of my return to the shores of France; of my entry into Paris, and of the retirement of the Bourbons. The true nature of these events must now be known to your Majesty. They are the work of an irresistible power, which knows its duties and its rights. The dynasty, which force alone has reinstated in France, was no longer compatible with the spirit of the French people. The Bourbons have refused to associate themselves with either

their laws or their customs: France has therefore been obliged to sever herself from them. She called for a liberator: the expectation which had led me to commit the greatest of sacrifices proved a vain one. I therefore returned, and from the spot where I first touched the soil of France, the love of my people bore me to the bosom of my capital. The first wish of my heart is to requite so much affection by the maintenance of an honourable peace. The re-establishment of the Imperial throne was necessary for the happiness of the French people. My most ardent thought is to render it at the same time conducive to the strengthening of European peace. Sufficient glory has shed undying lustre on the flags of the nations; the vicissitudes of fate have sufficiently caused a succession of great reverses and signal triumphs. A more noble arena is now open to the sovereigns, and I am the first to have entered it. After having presented the world with the spectacle of great battles, it will be more gratifying to know, in future, of no other rivalry than that which aims at the advantages to be gained by the blessings of peace—of no other struggle than the sacred one of perpetuating the felicity of mankind. France has pledged herself to proclaim with candour this noble aim of all her wishes. Jealous of her independence, the invariable principle of her policy will be the most absolute respect for the independence of other nations: if such are, as I cherish and hope, the personal sentiments of your Majesty, the general calm is assured for a long period; and Justice, seated at the confines of the European states, will alone suffice to safeguard their frontiers."

NAPOLEON.

To this letter manifesting such generous and conciliatory sentiments Napoleon received no reply. He soon learnt that it had been decided at the Congress of Vienna never to treat with him. The Allies, in fulminating their decree of outlawry against Napoleon and dubbing him as the breaker of treaties, lost sight of the fact that they and not Napoleon were the real transgressors, who had shamefully violated the treaty of 1814, which stipulated that Marie Louise and his son, the King of Rome, were to receive passports and an escort, that the Duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla were to be conferred upon the Empress and her son, that Prince Eugene was to receive a substantial compensation out of France, and that he himself was to receive 2,500,000 francs a year (during his exile at Elba), and the members of his family be granted the same allowance, none of which stipulations were observed by the allied Powers.

Notwithstanding all Napoleon's protestations of his earnest desire to live on friendly relations with all Europe, in spite of all his efforts to gain the confidence of the allied Sovereigns, defamatory and mendacious reports were circulated throughout the continent by the enslaved Press of the allied nations, wherein he was denounced in the blackest and most scurrilous terms as the bloodthirsty tyrant who would not be at peace with the world, and this infamous accusation was blatantly promulgated with virulent zest throughout England through the medium of books, pamphlets and journals, which found a ready access in every country of Europe : a scurvy way, we think, for a great people to vent their animosity and acrimony against the greatest military genius, the greatest human phenomenon the modern world had yet seen.

In spite of the fact that all the armies of Europe were

being concentrated upon the frontiers of France for the overthrow of the man whom she had chosen to control her destinies, that 264,000 Austrians and Germans, 310,000 British, Prussians, Belgians, Saxons, Hanoverians, and Brunswickers, 168,000 Russians and more than 200,000 auxiliaries from other nations—nearly one million of men, were closing upon him from all sides, Napoleon still found leisure to devote his attention to the administration of France. He now set about entirely reorganising the Imperial statutes and establishing a thoroughly constitutional government, in which work he was guided by the genius of Benjamin Constant de Rebec, Carnot, and Sismondi. He drew up, more especially with the assistance of the former, the Additional Act to the constitutions of the Empire, which, although approved of by an overwhelming majority, nevertheless elicited considerable dissatisfaction from the Republicans and Liberals. Not the least important of Napoleon's reforms was the granting of complete freedom of the press. Thus in less than two months, from the time of his return to Paris, he, with his wonted energy, suppressed an insurrection of the Bourbons and completely reorganised the constitution of France. Had Napoleon been the inhuman monster which his detractors glibly assert him to have been, would one of his first concerns have been, although on the very brink of universal war, the amelioration of the constitution of his Empire? We doubt it.

Napoleon's rule was once more firmly established all over France. It would have been difficult to imagine that barely two months before Napoleon was but a mere outcast, ostracised for the remainder of his days to the island prison of Elba, and the Bourbons seemingly inviolably seated upon the throne of their forefathers

which the coalesced armies of Europe had restored to them. In every part of France Napoleon's old veterans hastened to enrol themselves under the Imperial banner; and everywhere the eagles and the " N " reappeared. On the return of the Bourbons in 1814 the arms of the Empire on all the public edifices had been hastily and temporarily covered with plaster, and owing to the short-lived reign of Louis XVIII., from his entry into Paris on May 3rd, 1814, after Napoleon's first abdication, to his ignominious flight from France on the 16th of March, 1815, after Napoleon's triumphant return from Elba, a lapse of little over ten months, were still in a good state of preservation and unmutilated. Passing regiments stopped before the concealed eagles, and, as the plaster fell under the blows of the workman's mallet, the soldiers sang in chorus one of the many popular songs of the period to the air of the Marseillaise, a specimen of those most in vogue at the time being the following :—

" I salute thee, beloved eagle!
Thou whose audacious flight,
Announces to my native land,
The hero, the envoy of the Gods:
Take back thy immortal thunders,
Drive back the foe afar;
That the Rhine and Mont Cenis
Regain the shadow of thy wings!
Long live Napoleon! Honour to our warriors.
We swear! we swear! to guard France and her laurels."

During his sojourn in Paris Napoleon often reviewed his troops, whom he addressed as follows :—

" Soldiers! I arrived in France with nine hundred men, because I relied upon the love of my people, and on the memory of my old soldiers; I have not been disappointed in my hopes. Soldiers! I thank you. Sol-

diers! the throne of the Bourbons was illegitimate, because it had been restored by foreign hands, because it was proscribed by the wish of the French nation. The Imperial throne alone can guarantee the rights of the people, and more especially the first of all rights, that of our glory. Soldiers! we are about to march to drive from our territory those princes, the auxiliaries of the foreigner. The French people and I rely on you: we do not seek to meddle in the affairs of foreign nations; but woe to those who would meddle with ours!"

Boundless as was the enthusiasm and unbroken the confidence which the French troops still placed in their great leader, yet the Imperial army of 1815 could in no way be compared with the invincible legions of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland or Wagram. The disasters of recent years, the invasion of France by the allied Powers, the capture of Paris, had tended to cool its martial zeal. Napoleon's old veterans who had shared in his past glory, who had participated in his stupendous victories and won their laurels on a hundred battlefields, were for the most part either lying cold and still in their sequestered graves or dragging out the existence of valitudinarians. Moreover, Napoleon's marshals, or at least, those who were still left to him, glutted with glory, wealth, fame and honours, were sick of war, and served him half-heartedly.

If such was the state of the French army and the spirit of Napoleon's marshals during the Hundred Days, what about Napoleon himself during this same period? Was he the same as of yore? Had his vast intellect deteriorated whatsoever? Had his inexhaustible energy and activity lessened in any way?

Just as the French army of 1815, although its morale was high and its organisation excellent, was, as a fighting

machine, not to be compared to the imperial cohorts of Austerlitz and Jena, so was it, although in a lesser degree, with regard to the Napoleon of Friendland and Wagram and the Napoleon of the Hundred Days.

Not that Napoleon's mental activity was not supremely active, not that, from an intellectual point of view, he was not immeasurably above all other men (for mediocracy in Napoleon, if such an expression can be used with regard to him, was equivalent to genius in other men), not that he was not still the greatest captain of his age, or that his was not still the most virile mental organisation that the modern world had yet seen, but of this we are certain (whatever may be adduced to the contrary by many eminent and learned historians) the Napoleon who, in June 1815, marched headlong to his doom at Waterloo, was not the same man, mentally and physically, who in the autumn of 1805 led the Grandy Army to the overwhelming triumphs of Ulm and Austerlitz, and who in the following year overthrew Prussia at Jena and in 1807 brought Russia to her knees on the field of Friedland.

When and how did this mental and physical decline (imperceptible as it may have been to the world in general) in Napoleon originate? It is difficult to say. This, however, is certain, that this falling off of Napoleon's mental vitality can be traced as far back as the Moscow campaign. Witness the precious time he lost on his march at Wilna, Glubokoie and Vitepsk, and his apathy and lassitude at Borodino. His genius and activity, it is true, were never more manifest than during the German campaign of 1813 and his wonderful defence of France in 1814, but these were the last occasions upon which he was to dazzle the world by his astounding exploits in the jugglery of warfare. During

his banishment to Elba he had grown enormously corpulent. The want of continued exercise and more especially the lack of mental food for his gigantic intellect to feed upon told fatally upon him. The ravenous desires of his active brain could not subsist for long on the petty interests of Elba, and the result was that Napoleon's intellectual powers, although infinitely superior to those of any human being living, had sunk, for him, into a state of somnolence if not of actual debility, at least this holds true during his residence at Elba. A lion would starve on a meal with which a jackal would gorge itself to death, and so it was with regard to Napoleon's intellect compared with that of all other men.

Lord Rosebery says with regard to Napoleon's mental and physical impairment: "At Elba, again, he physically degenerated. A terrible activity had become necessary to his life. The suppressed energy, the necessary change of habits injured his health. He became enormously fat; this was the great change that struck his adherents on his return to the Tuileries in the following March. It was, moreover, soon clear that his health was broken. . . During the Hundred Days, though he displayed what in another man would have been energy, he had ceased to be Napoleon. He was a changed and doomed man. 'I cannot resist the conviction,' says Pasquier, who was in constant contact with the men who surrounded him, 'that his genius and his physical powers were alike in a profound decline.'"*

On the 1st of June, 1815, the Champ de Mai was convoked. This ceremony took place in the Champ de Mars opposite the Military School, and this was the last public function at which Napoleon was ever to preside.

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* "Napoleon: The Last Phase."

There, surrounded by the civic authorities of Paris, by deputations from the departments, by a numerous staff, a new army, the National Guard of Paris, and the pomp of the Roman Catholic faith, Napoleon, seated on a raised throne, said :—

"Like that King of Athens, I have sacrificed myself in the hope that the promise made to France, that her natural integrity, her honours and her rights may be realised. . . Frenchmen! my will is the will of my people, my rights are their rights; my honour, my glory, my happiness, cannot be other than the honour, the glory and the happiness of France."

It was proclaimed that the people accepted the Additional Act, and the gospels were presented to Napoleon, who took the oath in these words :—

" I swear to observe and to enforce the observation of the constitution of the Empire."

The assembly then took the oath of fidelity. A Te Deum was sung, and Napoleon, having distributed flags to his soldiers, exclaimed :—

" Soldiers of the National Guard of the Empire! Soldiers of the army, soldiers of the navy! I confide to you the imperial eagle with the national colours; you swear to defend it with your life against the enemies of our country and of my throne! You swear it will ever be your rallying sign! You swear it!"

The magnetic influence of Napoleon's personality fascinated whoever came in contact with him. His name was universally revered, at least throughout France. In the camp he was idolised by the soldiers; in the humble cottage he was worshipped by the peasant; he was adored by the bourgeoisie, and even unsophisticated school-girls loved him.

During the Hundred Days Napoleon visited the

School of Ecouen for the orphan daughters of the members of the Legion of Honour, of which he was the founder. The young ladies received him with every manifestation of enthusiasm, rapturous joy, and ardent love. They surrounded him with importunity, fell at his feet, and with tears embraced his knees. He tasted their food; the spoon he used became sacred to them; they had it cut up into pieces and moulded into trinkets and charms, which they wore in their bosoms as mementoes of the visit of their idol and benefactor, and as a pledge of their love they covered his hands with rings of braided hair cut from their own tresses, which Napoleon assured them would be as precious to him as the jewels of his crown. He was deeply affected by this effusion of naive love. As he was driving away he exclaimed, with emotion: "*Voici le comble de bonheur; ceux-ci sont les plus beaux momens de ma vie.*" Had Napoleon emulated the morals of Tiberius or Nero, as some of his detractors have accused him of having done, we doubt if he would have been the object of the fervent love—nay, of the adoration of unblemished womanhood.

CHAPTER III.

Napoleon leaves Paris for the French frontier—His address to his army—He advances against the British and Prussians in Belgium—He defeats the Prussians at Ligny—Battle of Quatre Bras—Retreat of the British on Waterloo—Battle of Waterloo—Reflections on the battle of Waterloo—The Old Guard—Second abdication of Napoleon—The Allies enter Paris—Further reflections on the battle of Waterloo.

As the Allies had resolved not to treat with Napoleon but had sworn to stake their very existence in the consummation of his overthrow, Napoleon decided to anticipate the onset of banded Europe and strike the first blow in the plains of Flanders, there to sever in twain the armies of Wellington and Blücher. Should a great victory crown his arms, not only would he be master of Belgium and the Netherlands, but the coalition would have sustained a shock entailing the utter subversion of the military plans of the Allies, and moreover Napoleon felt confident that once victorious Belgium would join his cause, which surmise we do not hesitate to say would have been realised, for at heart the Belgians detested the Allies and were devoted to Napoleon.

Great as would have been the advantages to Napoleon accrued by a successful invasion of Belgium, entailing, as an indispensable corollary, the complete annihilation of the British and Prussian armies, yet greater still would have been the advantages reaped by Napoleon had he struck at the heart of the coalition—at the army of Schwartzenberg on the upper Rhine, as a great victory over the main army of the coalition would have been fraught with immeasurably greater consequences to himself than had he been victorious at Waterloo, for in that

event he would have found himself once more supreme in Central Europe. As it was, Waterloo as a defeat of Napoleon ranks as the most momentous battle in modern history, inasmuch as it proved the death blow to the metoric career of the greatest conqueror the world has ever seen since Alexander lived, but as a victory for Napoleon its results would have been much less portentous than they actually were, for had fortune favoured him on that fatal day the utmost he could have reaped from his triumph would have been the conquest of Belgium and the Netherlands and a suspension, for the nonce, of the advance of the vast hosts of Russia and Austria on his eastern frontiers. Great as would have been the results of a victory gained by Napoleon at Waterloo, yet it would never have been as overwhelming a triumph as that of Austerlitz, for by that telling blow Napoleon became arbiter of Europe, despite the mighty coalition created against him by English subsidies and the implacable enmity of William Pitt.

On the 12th of June Napoleon left Paris for Flanders, and on the following day he arrived at Avesnes, near the Belgian frontier, where he assumed the command of his army, which he was to lead to his last and fatal campaign. The troops there assembled mustered 123,000 men with 362 guns, and on the following day, the 14th, Napoleon thus addressed them :—

"Soldiers! this is the anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland, which twice decided the destiny of Europe. Then, as after Austerlitz, as after Wagram, we were too generous. We believed in the protestations and in the oaths of princes whom we allowed to remain in possession of their thrones; now, however, banded together, they threaten the independence and the most sacred rights of France. They have commenced the most un-

just of aggressions; let us then march to meet them; are they and we no longer the same men?

" Soldiers! at Jena, against these same Prussians to-day so arrogant, you were one to three; and at Montmiral one to six!

" Let those among you who have been captives of the English describe the nature of their prison-ships, and the frightful miseries they endured.

" The Saxons, the Belgians, the Hanoverians, the soldiers of the Confederation of the Rhine lament that they are compelled to bear arms in the cause of princes, the enemies of Justice and of the rights of all nations; they know that this coalition is insatiable! After having devoured twelve hundred thousand Poles, twelve hundred thousand Italians, one hundred thousand Saxons, six hundred thousand Belgians, it now wishes to devour the states of the second rank in Germany.

" Madmen! one moment of prosperity has blinded them; the oppression and the humiliation of the French people are beyond their power; if they enter France they will there find their grave.

" Soldiers! we have forced marches to make, battles to fight, dangers to encounter; but with constancy, victory will be ours; the rights, the honour, and the happiness of the country will be recovered!

" To every Frenchman who has a heart, the moment has arrived to conquer or to die!"

We do not propose entering upon an exhaustive account of Napoleon's last campaign, culminating in the rout of Waterloo, which even to this day remains a subject for acute controversy, a vexed question and over which such a disparity of opinion exists, more especially with regard to the actual battle of Waterloo, of which, out of much written matter dealing with that memorable

event, no two accounts really agree. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a cursory survey of the main events of the campaign and to a few reflections on the so-called *victory* of the British at Waterloo.

On the 15th of June the French army crossed the frontier into Belgium and advanced upon Charleroi, which was promptly evacuated by the Prussians, the French pursuing them beyond the Sambre, and after two sharp engagements at Charleroi and Gossilies Napoleon reached Ligny and there, on the 16th, inflicted a severe defeat upon the Prussians under Blücher, who retired from the field with a loss of twelve thousand in killed and wounded, four standards, and twenty-one pieces of artillery.

At Ligny Napoleon fought his last battle but one, and set his last jewel in his resplendent crown of victories. Had D'Erlon's corps, twenty-four thousand strong, fallen upon the flank of Blücher's army at the crucial moment of the battle, in accordance with Napoleon's orders, instead of remaining inactive at Gossilies, between Ligny and Quatre Bras, the 16th of June, 1815, might have been memorised by a disaster to the Prussian army almost as overwhelming as that of Jena and Auerstadt.

At Ligny the French army numbered 73,000 men with 248 guns; the Prussian consisted of 84,000 combatants with 224 pieces of cannon. The numerical inferiority of the French was due to the fact that Napoleon had detached Ney to sieze Quatre Bras, eight miles on his left and eighteen to the south of Brussels, with injunctions to leave a detachment in occupation of that place, and with the remainder of his force to fall upon the rear of the Prussians at Ligny, which order that gallant marshal was unable to execute owing to the unexpected

turn of events. Had Ney succeeded in carrying out Napoleon's orders, doubtless this campaign would have terminated very differently and Waterloo would never have been fought.

In pursuance with Napoleon's orders, Ney had advanced on Quatre Bras and there, on the 16th, attacked the Belgians under the Prince of Orange, but as the latter retired from the field he was joined by a strong force of British and Brunswickers under Wellington and Picton, and a bloody encounter now ensued, resulting in the repulse of Ney, although in reality the battle of Quatre Bras was more a drawn battle than a victory for the Allies, as their losses amounted to five thousand two hundred men killed, wounded and prisoners, whereas the loss on the side of the French was little more than four thousand, and on the following morning Wellington, upon receiving intelligence of Napoleon's victory at Ligny, abandoned the field of battle, and at the head of his concentrated forces, now swelled to sixty thousand men, retreated upon the village of Waterloo or Mont St. Jean, where he hoped to be joined by Blücher's defeated army in full retreat from the bloody field of Ligny.

After his victory at Ligny Napoleon advanced upon Quatre Bras in pursuit of Wellington, and on the evening of the 17th found himself face to face with the British army advantageously posted on the crest of a range of gentle eminences in front of Mont St. Jean.

The two hostile armies were almost equal in number. Napoleon was at the head of nearly 72,000 men and Wellington's army mustered close upon 70,000 combatants. Had the French army at Waterloo been swelled by Grouchy's corps, thirty-two thousand strong, which Napoleon had detached in pursuit of Blücher after the battle of Ligny, which, as events transpired,

proved a supererogative measure, it would not be difficult to guess who would have been victorious on the 18th of June, 1815.

It is not our design to enter into a detailed narrative of the battle of Waterloo; that would be superfluous in face of what has already been written with respect to that great battle, and shall restrict ourselves to a mere glance at the main features which characterised that memorable contest and to a few reflections upon Napoleon's overthrow by the allied armies of England and Prussia.

During the whole of the 17th torrential rain had fallen which converted the roads into veritable quagmires, which considerably hindered the free movement of the French artillery, and precluded it absolutely from manœuvring. The 18th of June opened lugubriously with a cloudy sky and a drizzling rain; that fatal day for Napoleon was not ushered in by the sun of Austerlitz.

The battle commenced at half-past eleven a.m., by an attack of the French on the chateau and orchard of Hougomont on the British right, with, however, no decisive results. The next phase in the battle was an attack by the French on the British centre and left centre, which proved unsuccessful, although in the attack on the left centre of the British the French chasseurs and lancers overthrew Ponsonby's horse whilst the latter were in pursuit of the French. About this time the 4th corps of the Prussians, under Bülow, had arrived at St. Lambert, threatening the French right, which obliged Napoleon to detach a considerable body of troops to hold the Prussians in check. To this succeeded an attack by the cuirassiers on the British right and centre, in which both cases the assailants were repulsed with heavy loss, which was due, in no small measure, to the

terrible disaster which befell them at the sunken road in front of the British position. This reverse, however, was counterbalanced by the capture at about six o'clock of La Haye Sainte, in the British centre, by Donzelot's division, but scarcely had this success crowned Napoleon's arms than the Prussians under Bülow, sixteen thousand strong, fell upon the rear of the French army at Planchenoit, which obliged Napoleon considerably to weaken that part of his army immediately opposed to Wellington in order to arrest the progress of the Prussians in that quarter, and to preclude the possibility of having his communication with his rear intercepted in case of retreat. Scarcely had the progress of the Prussians been checked at Planchenoit than other Prussian forces appeared on the British left, and these also Napoleon kept in check by troops detached from his main forces in front of Mont St. Jean. With the capture of La Haye Sainte and the repulse of the Prussians at Planchenoit, Napoleon had in reality won the battle, and so confident was he of the issue of the contest that he sent off a courier at full speed to Paris to announce that the battle was won.

The situation of the British was now critical in the extreme—nay, was in truth desperate; for them the battle was lost; and the anxiety of Wellington was intense, bordering upon distraction. He was seen to wipe the perspiration from his brow and look repeatedly at his watch, and was heard to murmur, "Blücher or night." The British centre, however, remained still unbroken, and as long as it continued intact Napoleon could not hope of complete victory. He therefore, in order to decide the contest, ordered the Middle and the Old Guard, supported by other troops, to attack the British right centre, about midway between La Haye

Sainte and the chateau of Hougomont. Led by Ney, the Imperial Guard, with loud cheers and amidst the roll of drums, and in the face of a tremendous fire from the British line, charged up the ridge to the very apex of the British position to within forty paces of the English Foot Guards. Napoleon had now won the battle: for a moment victory was actually in his grasp; but only for a moment, for simultaneously with the attack of the Imperial Guard against the British right centre the sound of the Prussian cannon was heard resounding beyond Ohain on the British left, which announced that Blücher, in great strength, had at last arrived at the crucial moment to participate in the battle and save the British from destruction. With the sight of the Prussian standards and the proximity of their allies only five miles distant, and sanguine of victory, now that 36,000 additional troops were at hand, the confidence of the British was revived. Adams' and Vivian's brigades, with indomitable resolution, fell upon the victorious Imperial Guard and drove them down the hill; at that precise moment Blücher fell upon the right flank of the French army and drove it in, while a tremendous fire from a hundred guns was directed by the Prussians upon the French centre at La Belle Alliance. With the defeat of the Imperial Guard and its subsequent complete destruction and the capture of Planchenoit by the Prussians under Bülow on the French right, the battle was irretrievably lost to Napoleon, and the rout of the French army completed by the arrival, at the close of the day, of 40,000 additional Prussian troops.

Thus was Waterloo fought and won and Napoleon's power irretrievably overthrown—won not by the unaided efforts of a single army, but by the united hosts of England and Prussia.

The battle of Waterloo is not exclusively a British victory. England cannot claim a greater share in the overthrow of Napoleon on that eventful day than can Prussia, or any other one of the allied armies more than another in the defeat of Napoleon at Leipzig. Unquestionably the British fought at Waterloo with matchless heroism and a fortitude which will ever redound to the glory of British arms, and doubtless no other soldiers but the British would have resisted for so long the terrible onslaughts of the flower of the Imperial army; but for all that, as General Muffling declared, had the arrival of the Prussians been delayed by one hour Blücher would not have found Wellington in position, and the battle would have been lost to the British.

Has the supremacy of Hannibal over Scippio, as a military genius, been invalidated one tittle in spite of his defeat at Zama?

A train of fatalities pursued Napoleon from the outset of the Waterloo campaign. Two days before the battle of Ligny, on the 14th of June, General Bourmont deserted the French ranks, and treacherously disclosed to Blücher Napoleon's plan of campaign, which gave the Prussian commander time to concentrate his army to meet the first onslaught of Napoleon. But for the defection of Bourmont the battle of Ligny might have been converted into an overwhelming triumph for Napoleon, in which event the Prussian army would have been utterly destroyed, and Waterloo never have been fought. Had D'Erlon, as we have already stated, instead of remaining inactive between Ligny and Quatre Bras, marched to the assistance of Ney at the latter place, without the shadow of a doubt Wellington would have met with a crushing defeat at Quatre Bras and the campaign would

have been over, and 1815, instead of being the darkest year of Napoleon's career, would have commemorated one of his most glorious campaigns, almost as glorious as that of Marengo or Wagram.

The greatest fatality to Napoleon during the entire campaign was undoubtedly the non-appearance of Grouchy at the crucial moment of the battle of Waterloo; had that marshal, with his thirty-two thousand troops, joined Napoleon before the heights of Mont St. Jean in accordance with his master's orders, the whole history of the world would have been changed, and the sombre tragedy of Saint Helena never have been written.

Grouchy, while marching upon Wavre, distinctly heard loud cannonade in the direction of Mont St. Jean, which announced that Napoleon was then engaged with the British at Waterloo, and at the same time attacked on his right flank by Blücher and Bülow, but rather than march to the assistance of Napoleon, he chose, to his everlasting shame, to play the truant. It was in vain that his officers urged him to act; in spite of the prayers of his staff and the cries of his soldiers he remained inactive, and when it was thought that he was approaching the field of Waterloo to decide the battle, when from every side the cry was raised in the French army of "Victory!" "Here is Grouchy!" it was Bülow's army corps, not Grouchy's, that was advancing upon Planchenoit to the assistance of Wellington.

National pride relates the battle of Waterloo in a hundred different ways, but it is generally admitted, at least by those who are not virulently prejudiced against Napoleon, that Wellington would have ordered a retreat and abandoned the field of battle to the French but for the timely arrival of Bülow and Blücher, for he

would never have fought Napoleon at Waterloo except for the stipulation of being supported by Blücher. A second army arriving at the end of a battle, on the field of carnage, will always turn the scales in favour of the side whose cause it has championed.

The rain of the 17th played no insignificant a part in the destiny of Napoleon. Had it not rained the day before the battle of Waterloo the fate of the world might have been utterly changed, and Waterloo, instead of being the most tragic event of Napoleon's career, might to-day be numbered among the greatest of his triumphs. Owing to the softness of the ground his artillery could not manœuvre until it had acquired a certain firmness, in consequence of which the battle did not commence until half-past eleven instead of six o'clock, and this delay gave Blücher time to come up to the assistance of Wellington.

The French army fought at great disadvantage at Waterloo. The British occupied a position of considerably greater strength than that of the French. From the heights of Mont St. Jean Wellington overlooked the entire French army, and his artillery could be directed with telling effect upon the columns of the enemy advancing to the attack. Moreover, during the whole course of the battle the French were continually the aggressors, whereas the British, except towards the very end of the contest, remained throughout the entire day on the defensive, and it must be borne in mind that ever since the 15th the Imperial troops had been constantly on the march, and had scarcely had any rest at all, while on the other hand the British had a whole day in which to recuperate themselves on the plateau of Mont St. Jean. The disaster to the cuirassiers, at the height of the battle, at the sunken road on the crest of Mont St.

Jean, in their attack on the British squares, was another of the many fatalities which beset Napoleon during this fatal campaign, and which contributed in no small degree to his defeat at Waterloo.

The battle of Waterloo decided the fate of Napoleon and that of France. A last battalion of reserve, the illustrious but unfortunate remains of the column of granite of the field of Marengo, still remained unbroken, unshakable in the tumultuous tide of defeat. Napoleon retired within the ranks of these heroes, who were still commanded by Cambronne. He formed them into squares, and advanced at their head against the enemy. All his generals, Ney, Soult, Bertrand, Drouot, Carbineau, de Flahaut, Labédoyère and Gourgaud, unsheathed their swords and became soldiers. The old Grenadiers, indifferent to death, feared only the danger which menaced their beloved Emperor. They besought him to leave the field of battle: "Retire," cried one of them; "you see that death will have none of you." Napoleon, however, resisted, and ordered the Guard to fire. The officers who surrounded him seized his horse and led him forcibly from the field. Cambronne and his band of heroes closed round their eagles and bade Napoleon an eternal farewell. The British, moved by their heroic resistance, urged them to surrender: "No," replied Cambronne, "the Guard dies, but does not surrender!" At the same moment they threw themselves upon the enemy with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" The conquerors of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, and Montmirail were recognised by their heroic courage. The British and Prussians, whose pæan of victory they postponed for so long, banded themselves against this handful of heroes and destroyed them. Some, covered with wounds, fell submerged in

their own blood never to rise again. Others, more fortunate, were killed outright; finally, those whom death had spared shot one another rather than survive their companions in arms or die by the hand of the foe.

Napoleon, vanquished by the coalesced armies of Britain and Prussia, and beset by the opposition in France, on his return to Paris after the battle of Waterloo abdicated a second time in the following terms :—

" Frenchmen ! in commencing the war to maintain the national independence, I counted upon the reunion of all the efforts, of the entire will, and upon the co-operation of all the authorities of France. I was justified in hoping for success, and I defied all the declarations of the Powers allied against me. Circumstances seem changed. I offer myself in sacrifice to the hatred of the enemies of France; may they be sincere in their declarations and that my person only is the object of their designs ! My political career is terminated, and I proclaim my son, under the title of Napoleon II., Emperor of the French. The ministers actually in power will form the provisional council of the government. The concern which I feel for my son urges me to bid the Chambers to organise without delay the regency by a law. Unite yourselves for the public safety and to remain an independent nation."

On the 7th of July the Allies entered Paris. Louis XVIII. was reinstated on the throne; France was occupied during two and a half years by three hundred thousand foreign troops and obliged to pay to the coalesced Powers an indemnity of seven hundred million francs, of which one hundred and twenty-five millions was appropriated by England; one hundred millions by Russia; one hundred and twelve millions by Austria; one hundred and fifty millions by Prussia, and

the remainder by the lesser Powers. In addition to this France was mulcted with a further indemnity of seven hundred and thirty-five millions of francs as a compensation to the allied Powers for the spoliations she inflicted upon them during the Revolution, and besides she was made to pay to the smaller Powers a further indemnity of one hundred million francs. Thus the overthrow of Napoleon, the subversion of the power of a single man, cost France in all £61,400,000 sterling.

Thus closed the Revolutionary and the Napoleonic wars which began with Valmy and terminated with Waterloo, in which one thousand four hundred and eighty-eight battles were fought, and in which France proved, on land at all events, that no single nation, aided only by her own resources, could vanquish her.

Thus closed the meteoric career of Napoleon; and thus closed his military reign, which from 1799 to 1815 cost the world the lives of eight millions three hundred and forty thousand human beings!

A few reflections on the assumption of Napoleon having been victorious at Waterloo may perhaps be of interest.

Had Napoleon won the battle of Waterloo, had Waterloo been a second Austerlitz, had Napoleon been completely triumphant in Flanders over the Anglo-Prussian army as he had been ten years before in Moravia over the Austro-Russian host, doubtless the political state of Europe, nay, of the world, would be very different to what it is to-day, and yet the change might, after all, not have been as great as we may be led to suppose. However much the destiny of Europe would have been affected by a suppositional victory of Bonaparte at Waterloo, still, we doubt if the consequences of such a victory would have been as momen-

tuous to the world as those of the triumph of Austerlitz, or even by those of Wagram. The battle of Austerlitz transformed the whole political aspect of Europe. By this overwhelming victory Bonaparte became supreme in Central Europe; the Holy Roman Empire, or at least the tottering fabric which was dignified by this nomenclature, was dissolved for ever; the mighty coalition of Russia and Austria was utterly shattered; Austria, maimed and crippled, was reduced to a state of semi-vassalage, and the conqueror became Suzerain Lord of Europe. At Wagram Napoleon regained a continent; under the spires of Vienna the fate of Austria was confirmed, and for three years more Europe had to endure the incubus of his colossal power.

Had Napoleon been defeated at Austerlitz the consequences of such a defeat would have been immeasurably greater than those of the rout of Waterloo. Defeated at Austerlitz, Napoleon would have lost not only Germany, but Italy and Holland as well, and unquestionably such an event would have accelerated his stupendous fall by ten years. Not less great would have been the consequences had he been defeated at Wagram, for both Austrlitz and Wagram (if viewed as defeats to Napoleon) would have been battles as decisive to the world as that of Leipzig, and we consider Leipzig to have been a battle immeasurably more momentous to the world than Waterloo. Leipzig emancipated Europe from Napoleon's domination and eventually overthrew him from his throne. Waterloo merely saved Europe from the *possibility* of once more falling under his yoke by his complete overthrow and subsequent imprisonment at Saint Helena.

Let us suppose Napoleon victorious at Waterloo; what would have been the immediate results of such a

victory? Napoleon victorious at Waterloo would have meant the utter annihilation of the Anglo-Prussian army and the conquest of the Netherlands, and perhaps caused a deadlock in the advance of the armies of the coalition. This, we think, would have been the immediate consequences of a victory by Napoleon over the Anglo-Prussian army, however complete it may have been. Great as these results would have been, still, they would have been paltry compared with those of Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, or Wagram.

Even after being victorious at Waterloo Napoleon's position would still have been by no means secure, for there would still be the nucleus of the allied host to deal with. The vast army of Schwartzenberg would be threatening his eastern frontiers, while the armies of Russia, Sweden and Denmark would be advancing from the north, and then there would be the remainder of the Prussian army to account for. These forces together alone totalled at least 700,000 men, and this does not include the Spanish army converged at the foot of the Pyrenees, a coalition not a whit less formidable than that of 1813-14.

Transcendent as Napoleon's military genius was, it is nevertheless problematic if he could have prevailed over such numbers. Besides, the state of Europe in 1815 was very different to what it had been prior to Napoleon's overthrow in 1813. The nations of Europe were now banded together in a mighty league, the mightiest the world had yet ever known, against the erstwhile master of Europe. Europe had endured his oppressive power long enough; no longer would she be coerced by him. All the energy, all the virulence of a retributive world were now exerted in a common cause —his overthrow, once and for all. The Prussia of 1815

was not the vacillating Prussia of 1806. The catastrophe of Jena and her long term of oppression under French dominion had taught her a bitter lesson. Her soldiers were now animated by a patriotism and a resolution that nothing could shake. This also applied, although to a less degree, to all the other nations of Europe whom Napoleon had subjugated. They were now imbued with an inflexible resolution to overthrow, for good and all, their former oppressor, a resolution which the terrible mauling they received at his hands in the past had only tended to intensify.

Great as would have been the results of an assumed victory of Napoleon at Waterloo, yet this single victory would not have sufficed, we think, to crush the European coalition; a second victory not less decisive would have been necessary to accomplish this. To smash up Schwartzenberg's army would have been Napoleon's next aim before the northern armies of the confederacy had time to join hands with the Austro-German army on the upper Rhine. Let us suppose Napoleon victorious over Schwartzenberg between the Rhine and the Elbe, what would have ensued then? It is difficult to say. Would the Russians and Swedes have stopped short their march upon the news of Schwartzenberg's defeat? Presumably, if not, then a third great victory would have had to crown Napoleon's arms in order to crush this third army. Would Napoleon have awaited the enemy in Germany, or would he have anticipated him on Prussian soil? It is impossible to say. What about Prussia? Would she have remained passive, would she have struck no blow in Europe's cause—in her own cause? We hardly think so. The recollection of her years of bondage, of her sufferings then, combined with her hatred of her former conqueror, would

incite her into fighting to the bitter end; she would shed the last drop of her lifeblood rather than fall a second time under the yoke of her hated enemy.

A third victory over the united armies of Russia, Sweden and Prussia (for it is almost certain that Prussia would have joined her forces with those of her northern allies) on Prussian soil would have laid the kingdom of the Hohenzollerns for a second time at Napoleon's feet. Such an event would have crushed the coalition of Europe, for it is hardly presumable that Austria would have dared to oppose Napoleon single-handed after the utter overthrow of Prussia and the defeat of Russia and the other allies. With Berlin once more in his grasp the continent would have been at Napoleon's mercy. Both Austria and Russia would have been compelled to accede to his terms; the days of Tilsit and Schoenbrunn would have been revived.

We have assumed, more for the sake of argument than from a conviction of such a contingency, that Napoleon would have been so transcendentally successful, and yet why should we doubt that he would have succeeded, he the erstwhile master of Europe, if we consider the all but impossible exploits of his extraordinary career. Supreme once more on the Continent, what would his attitude have been towards the prostrate nations of Europe, those nations that had so recently hurled him from his lofty pinnacle of power, bereft him of his crown and of his liberty, and even of his kith and kin; that had incarcerated him in the island prison of Elba? Would he have avenged himself upon them for the misfortunes they had heaped upon his head in 1813-14? Would he make Europe rue the day she had presumed to throw off the chains of his despotism? Would he mulct the nations with an indemnity that

would paralyse their resources for years to come? Would the Continental system, hydra-headed, rise from its ruins against the commerce of England? In short, would he bind and gag the Continent, as he had previously done, so as to preclude all further opposition to his power? Possibly, but on the whole we think not; at least we doubt if he would have gone to such extremes even if France had permitted him; and would she have permitted him? We doubt it. The terrible calamities which he had brought upon her in 1814 had sickened her of war, she needed rest; she had drunk her fill from the bumper of glory; no longer would she truckle to his ambition; no longer would she be the slave of his desires.

Once the coalition had been crushed we think Napoleon would have contented himself with Europe west of the Rhine, including Holland, for his empire, and would willingly enough have lived on friendly terms with other nations had they allowed him to, and the rest of his reign would, in all probability, have been dedicated to promoting the internal prosperity of France, and under the guise of empire the days of the Consulate might have been revived. However much Napoleon may have desired to pursue his career of conquests, as we have said before, we doubt if France would have allowed him to accomplish more than crush the coalition, as she would have sanctioned the subjugation of the Continent for a second time. But would Europe have permitted him to reign in peace—would she not have attempted yet again to overthrow him? If so, the reconquest of Europe by Napoleon might have been the inevitable consequences of such a design, and perhaps, as a measure of self-preservation, France might have permitted him to do so, and then his

aspiration might have been realised; his power might once more have stretched from the Atlantic to the Niemen, and his dream of forming Europe into a confederacy of nations, into a United States of Europe under his suzerainty, might have been realised.

Let us presume the Continental powers, seeing that Napoleon had renounced all his former ambitious designs with regard to Europe (an irenic reign seems scarcely compatible with the fiery genius of Bonaparte) to have at last resolved no longer to molest him, would England have sheathed her sword also, she that had persistently refused to recognise his right to the French throne, or even his title of emperor, would she, we repeat, have consented to see her great enemy, the Corsican "adventurer," the "usurper," the despot Bonaparte, in quiet possession of the throne of the Bourbons? Doubtless not, and yet we thing that rather than see the world once more in the throes of war, rather than see her commence once more on the verge of ruin by the revival of the Continental System, she would have adopted, although reluctantly, the pacific measures of the Continental powers, and perhaps have even arrived at a friendly understanding with the great "usurper," the erstwhile "despot" of Europe.

Had Napoleon won the battle of Waterloo the consequences of such a victory would *indirectly* have considerably altered recent history, but its *immediate* results would not have been as momentous as is generally believed would have been the case, for, before the coalition could be crushed two victories, not less decisive than Waterloo, would have had to crown his arms, one on the upper Rhine and another either in Central Germany or in Prussia. Once victorious over the coalition, with Prussia a second time at his feet,

Napoleon would have been once more arbiter of Europe. But that he would have kept the continent once more in subjection we do not believe. Had Europe allowed him (and we think she would) Napoleon would have been contented with France, and Germany west of the Rhine, and perhaps Holland, for his empire, and we think he would have abstained from further conquests, not so much on his own account, perhaps, as on account of France, for she was nauseated with war, she had had a surfeit of glory and a glut of conquests. In fine, the *indirect* results of a victory by Napoleon at Waterloo would have affected the history of Europe insomuch that in 1837 France might still have been an empire, if not the colossal empire she had formerly been that bestrode Europe from the Atlantic to the Niemen, at least an empire with confines stretching from the North Sea to the Rhine and the Pyrenees, and comprising the ancient realm of Gaul.

CHAPTER IV.

Napoleon arrives at Rochefort—His letter to the Prince Regent—He surrenders himself to Captain Maitland on board the "Bellerophon" —Torbay—The "Bellerophon" arrives at Plymouth—Deportation of Napoleon to St. Helena decided upon by the British Government—Napoleon's letter of protestation against this decision—Lack of magnanimity displayed by England towards Napoleon—He is transhipped to the "Northumberland"—His voyage to and arrival at St. Helena —The Briars—Longwood—Description of St. Helena—Description of Napoleon's general appearance—Torment which he was subjected to at St. Helena—Sir Hudson Lowe—Napoleon's declining health—His death.

Napoleon was far from accepting Waterloo as a final defeat. Hope had not forsaken him, and his confidence in himself had not abated one iota. Had France stood by him after the disaster of Waterloo there is no doubt he would have made a supreme effort to arrest the advance of the British and Prussian armies upon Paris. Even after his flight from Paris to Rochefort he entertained the mad idea of rallying the remains of his shattered army and of prosecuting the war in the valley of the Loire. If after the rout of Leipzig he contrived, after a succession of brilliant victories, in keeping the coalesced armies of Europe at bay in the plains of Champagne and all but achieved the deliverance of France, why should he not now, after a disaster in reality much less portentous that that of Leipzig, succeed in checking the advance of Wellington and Blücher, and roll back the tide of invasion beyond the bounds of France?

On the 25th of June Napoleon received a peremptory order from Fouché to leave Paris, and the fallen con-

queror accordingly retired to Malmaison, Josephine's favourite country seat near Paris. Here he received a second order from the Provisional Government to retire to Rochefort, where two French frigates awaited him to convey him to America. Therefore, and chiefly through the intrigues of Fouché, Napoleon on the 29th left Malmaison and arrived on the 3rd of July at Rochefort.

A lieutenant in the French navy generously offered to effect Napoleon's escape in a Danish sloop; but on the 8th of July Napoleon reached Fourras, and spent the night on board a French frigate, the "Saale." The next day he landed in L'Ile d' Aaix. An English cruiser was at anchor in the Roads, and all the channels leading into the mouth of the Charante were blockaded by British warships; some youthful sympathisers of the fallen Emperor offered to convey him on a coasting vessel to the United States, but Napoleon declined this offer, as he would have been obliged to call on the Portuguese coast for provisions. The frigates of Rochefort made no attempt to run the blockade through the pusillaminousness of the French commander.

On the 14th Captain Maitland, in command of the British man-of-war the "Bellerophon," then cruising between the islands of Oléron and Ré, apprised Napoleon that he was prepared to convey him to England. Napoleon accepted the offer, never suspecting the shameful treatment he was to be subjected to, or the perfidy and guile of the British government. Relying on the generosity and magnanimity of his great insular foe, he wrote the following letter to the Prince Regent:

"Your Royal Highness: Exposed to the factions which distract my country, and to the enmity of the greatest Powers of Europe, I have closed my political

career, and I come like Themistocles to throw myself upon the hospitality of the British people, and I put myself under the protection of their laws, which I claim from your Royal Highness as the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies."

Gourgaud left immediately on board the British advice boat the "Slaney" for England as the bearer of this letter to the Prince Regent.

On the 15th of July Napoleon surrendered himself to Captain Maitland on board the "Bellerophon"; as he boarded the British man-of-war he said to Captain Maitland: "I surrender myself to you and put myself under the protection of the laws of England."

On the following day the "Bellerophon" set sail for England, as the mouthpiece of the British Ministers As Napoleon gazed upon the dim outline of the coast of France fast receding beyond the horizon—his last sight of France, he exclaimed:—

"Farewell, land of the brave! Three or four traitors the less and thou would still be the Great Nation, the mistress of the world." During his voyage to England, and from that country to Saint Helena, he occupied himself with his memoirs, which he concluded on the rock of his Promethean agonies.

At Torbay Napoleon learnt that Gourgaud had not been permitted to land or to communicate with the shore. and had been obliged to deliver over his letter addressed to the Prince Regent.

On the 26th the "Bellerophon" once more weighed anchor, and that evening arrived at Plymouth. Rumours of the deportation of Napoleon to Saint Helena commenced to be spread about, and the ministerial press of England, and on the 24th cast anchor before Torbay.

who were concocting a political stroke, directed all the venom of its acrimony against him.

All England seemed congregated at Plymouth: thousands of boats surrounded the "Bellerophon"; Plymouth roads on that day resembled a vast fair, and as Napoleon appeared on deck he was greeted with acclamation by the vast multitude. Women and young men were seen wearing pink carnations. The petty malice and bitter animosity of the British statesmen converted all these circumstances to the detriment of the illustrious captive in order to prejudice the English people against him and alienate him from their sympathy.

On the 31st of July Sir Henry Bunbury, Under-Secretary of State, and Lord Keith, Admiral of the Channel Fleet, notified *General Bonaparte* the decision of the English government to have him deported to Saint Helena: Generals Savary and Lallmand were ejected from Napoleon's suite; against this brutal measure, this perfidy of the British government, this violation of international law, and breach of confidence, unparalleled in history for its ignobleness, Napoleon protested in the following terms:

"On board the 'Bellerophon,' at sea."

"I here solemnly protest, in the face of heaven and of men, against the violence which has been done to me in disposing, by force, of my person and of my liberty. I came voluntarily on board the 'Bellerophon'; I am not a prisoner, I am the host of England. I came at the instance of the English captain, who professed having received orders from his government to receive me and to conduct me and my suite to England. I came with candour to put myself under the protection of England. Once on board the 'Bellerophon' I was immediately

under the safeguard of the British people. If the design of the British government, in ordering the captain of the 'Bellerophon' to receive me and my suite, was to lay a snare, then it has forfeited all honour and disgraced its flag.

"I refer to history. It will record that an enemy who for a long time had waged war against the English people, came freely in his misfortune, to seek protection under their laws. What more convincing proof could be manifested of his esteem and confidence in them? But how did England respond to such an act of magnanimity? She feigned to proffer a friendly hand to this enemy, and when he had surrendered himself in good faith she immolated him."

If ever an opportunity was offered any nation to manifest a spirit of magnanimity it was when Napoleon voluntarily surrendered himself to England, sought her protection, and placed himself under the aegis of her laws. What was England's attitude towards the man who had thus thrown himself upon her mercy? Did she attest to the world that she could be generous to a fallen foe? Did she avail herself of the golden opportunity of proving her appreciation of the tribute paid to her magnanimity by the erstwhile master of continental Europe, by the greatest military genius the world has known since Hannibal lived? Instead of evincing a spirit of charity or being moved by Napoleon's appeal to her sense of humanity, England forfeited her claim to Napoleon's gratitude and to the encomium of history by her want of leniency towards him and her callous and inhuman treatment of the mighty Conqueror. Instead of displaying a greatness of soul towards her fallen enemy she manifested a vindictiveness of spirit towards him which will ever cast obloquy upon her name,

and which can hardly be reconciled with her sense of justice and fair play. She scrupled not to stoop to a policy of persecution and petty insults. She denied him his title of emperor, and on the " Northumberland," the ship that bore him to Saint Helena, his last journey on earth, his baggage was searched and all his money sequestered from him. In short England treated Napoleon as an ordinary prisoner of war, whereas in reality he was nothing of the sort, having of his own free will surrendered himself to her and put himself under the protection of her laws. By far better for Napoleon had he met the fate of Ney than have lived to endure the horrors of his incarceration at Saint Helena.

Besides, there is no precedent throughout history to Napoleon's voluntary surrender to his most implacable enemy or to the tribute he paid to her spirit of generosity and certainly none as far as his banishment to Saint Helena is concerned. Hannibal committed suicide rather than be subjected to the merciless tyranny of Rome. Was Napoleon a common bandit, a mere felon to be deported *for life*, and without even the benefit of a trial, to a derelict island lost in the South Atlantic, 4,000 miles from the habitation of civilised man? What heinous crime had he committed that called for the petty tyranny, unintermitted persecution and malice of Sir Hudson Lowe, or that warranted his being followed at every step by a British officer, and his every movement spied by the Commissioner of the Bourbons and by those of the allied Powers? And this shameful, relentless persecution was directed by England against one whose equal as a soldier and legislator has not yet been born of British stock.

On the 4th of August the " Bellerophon " once more set sail for Torbay, as an attorney had arrived at Ply-

JAMESTOWN, SAINT HELENA.

mouth from London with a writ claiming the person of Napoleon to appear as a witness in a trial for libel then pending in the Court of King's Bench in London. It is hardly to be supposed that the British government, having caught its quarry, would allow it to land in England, as in that event Napoleon might doubtless have gained the rights of Habeas Corpus.

On the 7th, off Berry Head, Torbay, Napoleon was transhipped from the " Bellerophon " to the " Northumberland." As already stated, his luggage was examined and all his money confiscated. His suite were disarmed, and the British Ministry had the audacity to order Napoleon to surrender his sword, but happily for England's honour the fallen Conqueror was spared this indignity through the refusal of Admiral Keith to enforce this degrading insult. Thus had Napoleon been trapped by the duplicity of the British Government, and like a caged lion he was now being conveyed to his living grave of Saint Helena.

On Monday, the 8th of August, 1815, the " Northumberland" sailed from Start Bay on the long and dreary voyage (for Napoleon, at all events) to Saint Helena—Napoleon's last journey: Thus was the mighty conqueror, who for twenty years had filled the world with his renown, conveyed to that homicidal rock, two thousand leagues from Europe, which he was destined never to leave. The British Ministry had reduced his suite to four persons, Bertrand, Montholon, Gourgaud, Las Cases, and a few servants.

On the 15th of October, sixty-eight days after leaving England, and one hundred and ten after his departure from Paris, Napoleon set foot on the African rock of Saint Helena, and thanks to England, the greatest

tragedy, the greatest political crime on record throughout history was now consummated.

At first Napoleon was lodged in a small bungalow, "The Briars," belonging to a tradesman, a purveyor of the island, of the name of Balcombe, and two months later he was installed at Longwood, his last residence on earth, and where he was destined to drag out the last five years of his life—five years of unintermitted persecution and torture.

The last residence of the erstwhile king of kings consisted of nothing more pretentious than "a collection of huts which had been constructed as a cattle-shed. It was swept by an eternal wind: was shadeless and it was damp."* And moreover, it was infested by myriads of rats; and there, in this miserable abode, he was under the perpetual surveillance of British sentries.

The following description of Saint Helena, published five years before Napoleon's incarceration there, when his power was at its very zenith, may prove not uninteresting in view of the fact that to many English historians a more delightful, salubrious, or ideal spot than Saint Helena could scarcely have been chosen as the residence, for the remainder of his years, of such a cutthroat as Napoleon:—

"Saint Helena, an island in the South Atlantic Ocean, held by the English East India Company, has a circumference of about 20 miles, and it has the appearance at a distance of a rock, or castle, rising out of the ocean, being accessible at one particular spot, where the town is erected in a valley at the bottom of a bay between two steep dreary mountains. . . . It has some high mountains, particularly one called Diana's Peak, which

* Lord Rosebery, "The Last Phase."

is covered with woods to the very top. There are other hills also, which bear evident mark of a volcanic origin, and some have huge rocks of lava. . . . Cabbages and other greens thrive extremely well, but are devoured by the caterpillars, as are the barley and other kinds of grain by the rats, which are very numerous. . . . The number of inhabitants on the island does not exceed 2,000, including nearly 500 soldiers and about 600 slaves."†

Such was the spot which England, in her magnanimity, had selected as the abode, for the remainder of his days, of the man who had been virtually master of the civilised world.

The personal appearance of Napoleon during the first two months of his captivity at Saint Helena is thus described by William Warden, a surgeon on board the "Northumberland," who on several occasions visited Napoleon during his residence at "The Briars" and at Longwood, in "Letters from Saint Helena" :—

"His forehead is thinly covered with dark hair, as well as the top of his head, which is large, and has a singular flatness. What hair he has behind is bushy; and I could not discern the slightest mixture of white in it. His eyes, which are gray, are in continual motion, and hurry rapidly to the various objects around him. His teeth are regular and good; his neck is short, but his shoulders of the finest proportion. The rest of his figure, though blended with Dutch fulness, is of a very handsome form. His face is uncommon; large, full and pale, but not sickly. In conversation, the muscles suffer little or no exertion; with the exception of those in the immediate vicinity of the mouth, the whole seem

† "Universal Gazeteer," by John Walker, M.D., 1810.

fixed, and the forehead particularly smooth . . . . but however earnest Napoleon may be in conversation, he discovers no distortion of feature. When he wishes to enforce a question, he sometimes employs his hand, but that alone. He sometimes smiles, but I believe he seldom laughs."

The horrors and misery which Napoleon experienced at Saint Helena exasperated him beyond endurance. It was in vain he complained of his treatment to the English Government. Exercise, which was so necessary to his health, he had practically to renounce through the humiliations which he was subjected to and to the strict watch set upon all his movements. His relentless jailors carried their insolence to the extent of forcing themselves into the privacy of his chamber. In short, during his long term of agony at Saint Helena, unmitigated during a period of nearly six years, he was the object of every conceivable indignity, and the Governor, Sir Hudson Lowe, seemed to take pride in the insults which he unpitvingly levelled at his hapless prisoner.

To Napoleon's moral agony soon was added physical sufferings, for as early as 1818 the first symptoms of the malady, cancer of the stomach, which eventually proved fatal to him, began to be manifest, although only in an incipient form, and which at first was mistaken by O'Meara, Napoleon's physician at Saint Helena, for an indigenous liver complaint. In August Gourgaud, on his return to Europe, wrote to Marie Louise: " Napoleon is dying in the torments of the most terrible agony." A few months later O'Meara, alarmed at the state of the health of his illustrious patient, hastened to apprise the Secretary of the British Admiralty that " Napoleon's life was endangered by a further residence in a climate such as that of Saint Helena, more espe-

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cially if the danger of his sojourn was aggravated by the continuance of those persecutions and indignities which he had been unceasingly subjected to."

Some generous hearts addressed urgent petitions in favour of the *patient* of Saint Helena to the Ministers of the Powers assembled at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. Others dared to intercede with the Emperors of Russia and Austria. The Congress and the Ministers remained deaf to the cries of humanity.

O'Meara wrote to Lord Bathurst "that the crisis which he had foretold was imminent, that the premature death of Napoleon was certain if the same inhuman treatment of the captive was persevered with."

Napoleon, however, was destined still to endure nearly three more years of unintermitted torture and despair before death released him from the persecution of his relentless jailors. The end was fast approaching. On the 17th of March, 1821, Montholon announced to the Princess Borghese that the malady of Napoleon had made alarming progress within the last six months. Bertrand had previously written to Lord Liverpool apprising him of Napoleon's condition, and emphasising the urgent necessity of an immediate change of climate for the dying captive; but Sir Hudson Lowe refused to have this letter transmitted to the British Government under the pretext that the title *Emperor* had been used therein with reference to Napoleon. Such a barbarous policy rendered both the allied Sovereigns and their Ministers insensible to every feeling of compassion.

Since the 7th of March Napoleon's condition had been extremely critical; his strength was rapidly ebbing; it was only with the greatest difficulty he could rise from his couch. Towards the end of April his malady had assumed a fatal character. On the 1st of May he had

risen : but extreme weakness obliged him to resume his bed. By his orders a bust of his son had been placed before him, upon which his eyes were constantly fixed,* On the 3rd his condition became alarming; on the following day there was a glimmer of hope, but on the 5th it was dispelled. Never had suffering been borne more calmly; no sign of pain was to be discerned upon his countenance; no groan escaped his lips; his gaze was serene, his soul at peace. He was often heard to utter in a feeble voice these words : " French nation . . . Nothing for my son but my name! . . . " At six o'clock in the evening, and as a great storm was raging, Napoleon, with an effort, crossed his arms and pronounced these two words, " Tête . . . Armee," then with a last gaze at the bust of his son his great soul passed away.

Thus closed, in his fifty-first year, on the rock of

* " The Lucy and Maria, recently arrived at Portsmouth, left Saint Helena on the 17th of June. Bonaparte was well. He had lately received a bust of his son which afforded him much evident satisfaction. It was given in charge of a sailor of the Ship Baring (it was believed), who, upon his arrival at the island, was to concert the most prudent means of conveying it to its destination. The man became dangerously ill before the opportunity of executing his secret commission presented itself; and, sending for his commanding officer, he revealed the circumstances to him. The bust was thereupon sent to Sir Hudson Lowe, who, treating the matter lightly, though Bonaparte had long refused to be on terms of even courteous civility with him, instantly caused it to be conveyed to him. Bonaparte's health had improved of late; he spends most of his time at his billiard table."—" The Observer," Sunday, August 17th, 1817.

ENTRANCE TO NAPOLEON'S TOMB, SAINT HELENA.

Saint Helena, the mortal career of the greatest human phenomenon of modern times. A remarkable fact about Napoleon's career is that he for whom a continent was too small was born in an island—Corsica, was confined in an island—Elba, was taken captive and imprisoned by an insular Power—England, and died on an island—Saint Helena.

In his will Napoleon had expressed the wish to be buried on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of the French people whom he had loved so well. This wish, however, was not immediately fulfilled; not until nineteen years after the death of the great Conqueror was it to be realised; and now, under the majestic dome of the Invalides, lie the earthly remains of him whose name fills more space in history than that of any other human being this world has ever known.

Napoleon's body remained exposed during two days; his remains were dressed in the uniform of the chasseures of his Guard, and partly covered by the celebrated grey cloak he had worn at the battle of Marengo.

Thus, the dead Napoleon, dressed as he was wont to be during life, was buried in a secluded spot called Slane's Valley, at no great distance from Longwood. His body was placed in a tin coffin fitted with a kind of mattress and pillow, and lined with white satin; his sword was placed by his side and a crucifix on his breast. His hat was placed at his feet, and some eagles and coins, stamped with his effigy, were also placed in the coffin. His heart, deposited in a silver urn, and his intestines, placed in a cylinder of the same metal, were placed at the foot of the coffin. The tin coffin, closed and soldered, was placed in another coffin of mahogany which, in its turn, was placed in a third coffin of lead, and this last one was placed in a fourth of mahogany,

which was sealed and closed by iron screws. A few weeping willows shaded the spot where lay the remains of him for whom the world had been too small.

CHAPTER V.

Concluding remarks on Napoleon—His character, habits, and views on religion—His judgment on himself.

It seems incredible that a mere sub-lieutenant of artillery should have, in the course of only thirteen years, overrun the civilised world, and within that brief space of time have condensed the work of centuries in his capacity of soldier, administrator and ruler. It is this vast supremacy which, besides the other salient traits of his character, has placed Napoleon in the very van of the giants of history.

No doubt Napoleon was great, and had he only been given time he would have raised the standard of mankind. But in a sense the world was not prepared for him, he was in advance of his times, and during his era monarchial principles were too deep-rooted. Nevertheless, whether hobnobbing with kings, whether in contact with the people, whether in public, even in his private life, Napoleon was truly great.

It is not in the conjectures, in the speculations of writers that men, who have risen above their fellow-creatures, are to be judged: it is their conduct which has to be followed step by step; it is their actions which must be seen, their words which must be heard.

Napoleon died on the 5th of May, 1821. Listen to him, when, two days before his death, he assembled his friends around him.

Did he complain of his persecutors? Did he make the slightest allusion to the perpetual insults to which he was subjected to? No; those cowardly, contemptible indignities were too much beneath him. In order not to see his persecutors he had renounced all exercise so necessary to his health; not wishing even to name them, he contented himself by saying to his physician, Antommarchi: "When I am no more you will go to Rome, you will see my mother and my relations; you will apprise them of what you have seen with regard to my situation, my illness and my death. You will say that Napoleon the Great breathed his last on that desolate rock, in the most deplorable condition, bereft of everything, abanoned to himself and his glory. You will say that in expiring he has bequeathed to all the reigning houses of Europe the shame and the horrors which darkened his last days."

Such was the manner in which in intimacy Napoleon expressed himself to his physician: listen to him as he addresses his companions in exile: "I am about to die, I am leaving you: you will return to Europe, where you will be the object of the curiosity of many, where fresh troubles await you. Remember that you have shared my exile; remember that you have given a noble example of fidelity and attachment. You have proved that among men there are some who are not influenced either by interest or egoism or ambition. You have proved that there are some human beings who can sympathise with misfortune. Do not tarnish that noble trait by any blameable action. The principles of moral are engraved on our conscience; you will find them also in my laws and in my actions. Respect my memory and make it respected by those who do not know me. Proclaim openly and to the world that my intentions

were pure: that I desired the well-being of humanity, order and justice in society, and that I desired to regenerate mankind by enchaning monarchial despotism, unmasking imposture, and punishing iniquity. The times in which I reigned were very difficult; I had powerful enemies to vanquish. My subjects loved me, but the passions of ingrates alienated them from me. In spite of me I have had to be severe, but never have I been ungrateful, never cruel.

"I was not destined to complete the arch; and my subjects have been deprived of those liberal institutions which I had prepared for them because my enemies would have benefited by them. That care be taken of the use which France has made of liberty when the disaster of Waterloo deprived me of the power of aiding her. Make me known before I am judged; make justice be rendered to my principles and to my glory. Farewell!"

It is conceivable that an ambitious despot seated on the throne might lie in order to add more lustre to his crown, a leaf to his laurels; but that a dying man should utter sentiments contrary to his views and to his principles; that a truly great man, as Napoleon undoubtedly was, standing on the very brink of the grave, should dishonour himself by a series of untruths is not conceivable—not human.

Great as Napoleon was, yet, he has no claim to the title of *hero* in the absolute sense of the word; he was not a hero in the sense that Miltiades, Epaminondas, William Wallace, Du Guesclin or Bayard were heroes; besides, few if any heroes pure and simple are numbered among the phenomena of the human race, or have entered the Valhalla of the giants of history. It Napoleon was not a hero in the literal sense of the word it is

TOMB OF NAPOLEON AT SAINT HELENA.

due to the fact that no hero ever attained to a pre-eminence of power such as he wielded. Such a supremacy would be an incongruity as far as the mere ideal hero is concerned; he would forfeit his title of such by the very exuberance of such power. Like Napoleon, neither are Alexander nor Cæsar heroes pure and simple, but with him they form a triad of the world's greatest human phenomena.

As a conqueror Napoleon outstripped Alexander, Cæsar, and Charlemagne; as legislator he surpassed Peter the Great, Henry IV., and Cromwell; as a sovereign his reign was every whit as glorious as that of Louis XIV.; if Napoleon was not such a spartan as Charles XII. he was nevertheless as abstemious in moral and physical indulgences as the Swedish King, and his morals were infinitely superior to those of Louis XIV. or to those of most monarchs of whatever nation, who had preceded him or who were his contemporaries.

Doubtless had Napoleon died on the throne, in the fulness of power, his reign would have been named the Napoleonic Age, for in every science, in all arts, in every profession, even in literature, the reign of Napoleon was prolific of great men: those who wish to be convinced of this have only to glance at a list of his contemporaries.

Although Napoleon owed his supremacy chiefly to his genius, yet, his profound knowledge of the human heart contributed in no small degree to the bewildering power which he attained. Never did anyone succeed in eliciting so fully the love of his subjects or the admiration of even his bitterest enemies as did Napoleon. It is true that his will was absolute, that France, by immense sacrifices promoted the expansion of his power,

but if we consider all the revolutions which before and since his time have agitated France, it will be seen that the French people were not prone to be carried away by such a fervid enthusiasm for any of their other rulers as they evinced for him. Since Napoleon a *legitimate king* failed in compelling the press to prevaricate or hide the truth; and since then a *citizen king* was constrained to erase from his coat of arms the ancient lily of France.

Napoleon obtained what he desired by noble means and rarely stooped to a base action, and when he did it was generally in spite of himself.

His soldiers adored him. This is not surprising. He seemed to know them all. He would say to one: "Well! my man, how is your father whom we saw the other day?" To another: "You fought splendidly in that engagement. How! you are not decorated? Here is the cross of honour, no one has merited it more than you." And then he shared with his soldiers their hardships, their sufferings, their privations and their dangers.

For the faults of those who displayed courage he was indulgent. If at night he made the round of the camp, if he discovered a sentry asleep, he took the musket and did sentry duty. On awakening the soldier, dismayed, would cry: "I am lost! It is the Emperor!" "No, my friend," Napoleon would reply with kindness, "after so many fatigues it is permissible for a brave soldier like you to sleep; in the first battle you will make amends for this mistake." Thus did Napoleon win the undying love of his soldiers and transform them into unconquerable heroes, and as they fell dying on the field of battle their last cry was, "Vive l'Empereur!"

Napoleon had many enemies, and he knew them: but when he was persuaded of the honesty of his adversaries he never hesitated to employ them. "One cannot please every one," he was in the habit of saying. To one of his many enemies he once remarked: "I know that you are my enemy; I respect opinions: but you have honour, you can serve your country by doing such or such a thing; may I count upon you?" Rarely did he meet with a refusal.

It has been said, at least by his traducers, that Napoleon was without sentiment or feeling. This is a gross error. His predelictıon for high tragedy, his well-known exclamation: "Had Corneille lived in my time I would have made him a prince," the scene of Julio, which he had improvised for the amusement of Josephine and her friends, a scene which is to be found in the memoirs of Bourienne, his emotion after the bloody field of Eylau, his compassion for Stapps, the youthful regicide, after his attempt upon his life at Schoenbrunn in 1809, and even his own death (without mentioning his pardon of the Comte de' Entraigues and of Moreau, or his magnanimity towards the Princess of Hatzfeld) all prove to the contrary. Moreover, he pardoned many of his enemies that had conspired against him, and even those who had attempted his assassination.

His great political crime, the death of the Duke d' Enghien, was instituted from purely ambitious motives, not from vindictiveness or cruelty. The same applies with regard to his divorce.

Much has been said with respect to Napoleon's ambition, which is fully demonstrated by the following incident.

Cardinal Fesh, Napoleon's uncle, was endeavouring to dissuade the latter from embarking upon the Russian war of 1812. It was noon, the palace of the Tuileries was bathed in the refulgent rays of a brilliant sun. Napoleon took the cardinal by the arm and led him to a window, which he opened, then indicating a point in the heavens, he said : " Do you see that star?" " No," replied Fesh. " Very well," replied Napoleon, " but I see it." This incident explains Napoleon's attitude towards the Spanish Bourbons, the Pope, and other European dynasties. Such boundless ambition was in a sense, a misfortune for mankind and blighted, so to speak, many a virtue latent in his enigmatical nature.

Napoleon had a noble heart, he loved everything that was great. During his Italian campaign of 1796-7 he was seen paying homage to the Republic of San Marino, that had refused an augmentation or territory. At Boulogne he gave gold and granted liberty to some British sailors who, to return to their native land, had ventured their lives on the open sea in a frail skiff which they themselves had built. He was merciful and generous. At Berlin he said to the Princess of Hatzfeld, whose husband had been sentenced to be shot for treason : " Do you know the writing of your husband? Read; then throw this letter into the fire; this piece of evidence once destroyed, it will no longer be in my power to condemn your husband." At Chamartin, near Madrid, in 1808, he pardoned the Marquis de Simon, who had been sentenced to be shot for insubordination against French authority. The Marquis owed his life to the intercession of his daughter, who threw herself at the feet of Napoleon and obtained, through his clemency, a commutation of the sentence passed on her father.

With a munificent hand he conferred largesses, the enunciation of which would form a volume in itself. He was magnanimous to his enemies, whom he had vanquished; and when he was overthrown in his turn he counted upon the generosity of his conquerors, but he was deceived. He returned to Russia prisoners of war without exacting a ransom, he reduced the war indemnity upon Prussia, he spared the houses of Hapsburg and Hohenzollern from annihilation when nothing could have precluded him from utterly subverting the dynasties of Austria and Prussia. He surrendered himself to the mercy of England, his most relentless and implacable foe, and how did she respond to this extraordinary manifestation of trust in the magnanimity and honour of a victorious enemy?—She immolated him. In short, all his virtues were those of a great genius, all his faults emanated from his inordinate ambition; but perhaps such boundless ambition is inseparable from so much greatness.

Napoleon's vigilance never relaxed for a moment. He often corrected the accounts of his ministers to the prejudice of the state. His activity knew no bounds. He often surprised his prefects in bed at eight o'clock in the morning.

He never rested when there was anything to be done: the eve of a battle he generally spent on horseback. In short, five thousand five hundred and sixty-two laws were promulgated during his reign.

He strove to infuse into the French nation his love for work. He visited the schools and encouraged the scholars, and often repeated to them: "My children, every hour that is lost deprives you of a chance of success in the future." He entered into the most minute details: he would ask: "How fares the work with this

young man? What will you do with that one?" If he received a favourable reply with regard to any particular student, "Courage," he would say, then, turning to the president of the university, who always accompanied him on such occasions, he would add: "Write the name of that young man in your memorandum book."

Napoleon had a profound knowledge of history, which he often revealed by the remarks he made during his military marches. Here was the prison of Richard Cœur-de-Lion; there, was a spot celebrated for a scene enacted during the Thirty Years' War. Here Turenne had stood; there Charles XII. had passed. Yonder, the Hebrews had fought; there, Godefroy de Bouillon had led his crusaders; everything was familiar to him.

Napoleon evinced great love for the arts. He proved it by honouring David and other great painters and sculptors, and all artists in general.

He honoured Talma, the great tragedian, with his friendship. Pierre David, the author of a beautiful epic poem, "l'Alexandreide," he loaded with honours.

It is true he persecuted the press; but then Napoleon considered himself a reformer. To allay the passions he used to say it was necessary to prohibit the journalists from rousing them, nevertheless he contemplated a constitutional regime for the future. If he thought it was a great injustice to deprive a nation of its rights, he deemed it a still greater injustice to give a nation liberty which is not prepared to receive it.

Besides, Napoleon was nearly always at war. The press, had it been free, might have subverted all his plans, and made him lose a campaign, and with regard to this point, experience has not yet proved that he might have been mistaken. He viewed journalists as

a set of mercenaries ready to sell their country to gain subscribers. It has been said he had an antipathy for men of letters: this is another error. He had an aversion for makers of books. He disapproved that an ambassador should fritter his time in writing romances or libels; but he loved literature and science. Like Alexander he desired a Homer, and he searched for one. We have of him a problem on the measurement of the circle which he himself set down and resolved; but other concerns directed his efforts and his genius to other aims.

The beautiful column of bronze in Paris, on the Place Vendôme, made from the guns taken at Austerlitz, the magnificent Arc de Triomphe, the greatest triumphal arch in the world, that of the Carousel, both also in Paris, the roads, canals, quays, bridges, slaughter-houses, graneries, and edifices of every description which Napoleon left as a legacy to France, prove that his designs were beneficient, grand, and well directed.

Napoleon could manifest the greatest presence of mind in the midst of misfortune. At the terrible passage of Berezina, in the retreat from Moscow, when the battalion of his guard had surrounded him and the regimental band had struck up the air: "*Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?*" he exclaimed, "No, no; rather: '*Veillons au salut de' l'Empire*," thus transforming the spirit of his soldiers from a state of abysmal depression to one of unbounded enthusiasm.

Napoleon was endowed with a profound judgment both as a soldier and ruler. The great events which have agitated Europe since his time he announced and foresaw them all.

The organisation of his government was adopted by

his successors in nearly all its essential particulars. Prefectures, lotteries, registry of lands, colonial and police systems, even conscription, everything was preserved. His Code changed name but remained essentially the same. Money changed its effigy, but was struck on the same system. The changes, which were introduced in the regulations of public instruction, were by no means ameliorations.

Religion in France obtained some privileges after the fall of Napoleon, but these privileges ruined it.

Napoleon, deeming that a religion of some sort was indispensible to a monarchy, had re-established public worship and restricted the power of the church in order to preserve it; time, however, showed that to give it more power meant to lose it.

Some writers have stated that Napoleon had no religion; others have asserted that he was an atheist. Bourienne himself has declared that Napoleon had re-established public worship in order to make use of the priests; he has even gone so far as to assert that this motive was expressed by the First Consul himself. Some so-called English biographers have endeavoured to render Napoleon odious to their contemporaries by branding him as an unbeliever, and adduce as a proof of this assertion some of his remarks in his proclamations to his soldiers during his Egyptian campaign of 1798, when he said : " The Mohammedans believe there is no other God but God, and that Mohammed is His prophet. *Do not contradict them,*" and when he proclaimed to the Egyptians themselves : " *Are we not true Moslems? Is it not we that overthrew the Pope and destroyed the Knights of Malta, who bade Christendom wage war against you?*" Napoleon's detractors were, after all, not far wrong, for he certainly can hardly be

called a believer, at least as far as the divinity of Christ is concerned, which is attested by his frank admission to Volney, the Orientalist, to Lord Ebrington at Elba, and to Gourgaud at Saint Helena. It is difficult to say what Napoleon's views were, but of this we may be certain, religious in the literal sense of the word he certainly was not. On the whole we are disposed to think that he inclined towards materialism, tinctured by a sort of Deism. On several occasions Napoleon proclaimed his belief in the existence of a God: "I do not believe in forms of religion, but in the existence of a God," he said. One clear starry night on the ship "l'Orient," during his journey to Egypt, the French *savants*, who accompanied him, were propounding on deck their atheistic philosophy when Napoleon, turning towards them, and pointing to the star-strewn firmament, asked: "All very well, Messieurs, but tell me who made all these?"

In spite of Napoleon's heterodoxy with regard to religion and that during his life he refused to take the Sacrament, he nevertheless, on his death bed at Saint Helena, appears to have been given extreme unction by the Abbé Vignali, who, when Sir Hudson Lowe with merciless barbarity had deprived his illustrious prisoner of the medical attendance of O'Meara, had been sent to Napoleon with Antommarchi, the young Corsican doctor. Whether the last Sacrament was administered by Napoleon's desire or not is not clear; more probably not, and that he was insensible at the time, although it is asserted by some that he was conscious when this was done and that it was administered at his special desire, and he is credited with having said to Antommarchi, when the latter expressed some surprise: "Perhaps you are above such weakness; but I am

neither a philosopher nor a physician. . . Not every man is an atheist who would like to be."

Napoleon was sometimes violent, as are all those who feel keenly: but his manners were not boorish: on the contrary, he rarely failed to please and to win over his auditors to his views by the irresistible charm and fascination of his personality, and by those gifts with which he was endowed by nature, enhanced by an excellent education.

The least important of his interviews proves his persuasive powers. On a certain occasion a deputation of the Consistory of the reformed church of Paris repaired to the Tuileries to request of Napoleon the permission to place a bell in its temple. Napoleon listened to the president and spoke to him with kindness: then concluded by asking him, with an air of indifference: "To what purpose will this bell serve?" "But, Sire," replied the president, "unless it is to call you, I do not see its utility." The deputation left enchanted at not having obtained the bell.

In short, to thoroughly judge Napoleon, it is necessary to study the times in which he appeared on the political stage of the world; it is necessary to follow his career from his departure for Toulon in 1793 to his death at Saint Helena in 1821, where he pronounced that judgment of himself which has not yet been surpassed by any historian.

"After all," said Napoleon in his captivity, as he cast aside the book of an English historian, "they may abridge, suppress, mutilate as much as they please; it will nevertheless be very difficult for them to efface me completely. A French historian in bounden duty will some day write of the Empire, and, if he has a feeling heart, he will be obliged to restitute me something, and

take my side, and his task will be easy, because actions speak for themselves, they shine like the sun.

"I have closed the abyss of anarchy, and cleared the chaos; I have bridled the Revolution, ennobled mankind, and consolidated the European dynasties. I have encouraged every ambition, rewarded every merit, and extended human glory to its uttermost limits. All this, after all, is something. Besides, for what could I be condemned for which no historian could exonerate me? Would it be for my intentions? for these he will absolve me. For my despotism? but he will prove that a dictatorship was of vital necessity. Will it be said that I trampled upon liberty? but he will prove that violence, anarchy, and great disorders were still at the threshold of France. Will I be accused of having loved war too much? but he will point out that I was always attacked. Of having aspired to universal dominion? but he will demonstrate that it was the fortuitous work of circumstances. and that it was our enemies themselves who led me to it step by step. Finally, will it be for my ambition? ah! doubtless he will consider me to have been ambitious, and inordinately so; but inspired by an ambition the loftiest and most sublime with which man was perhaps ever inspired: that of establishing, in short of consecrating the empire of reason and of the free exercise—the entire enjoyment of the human faculties! And here the historian will perhaps regret that such an ambition was not realised—not consummated!"

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